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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

WITH A MEMOIR

SEVEN VOLUMES IN THREE

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

COMPRISING VOLS. III., IV., AND V.

VOL. III.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1803.

	Page
Departure from the Vale of Grasmere, August, 1803	1
At the Grave of Burns, 1803, Seven Years after his Death	2
Thoughts suggested the Day following, on the Banks of Nith, near the Poet's Residence	6
To the Sons of Burns, after visiting the Grave of their Father	9
Ellen Irwin: or, The Braes of Kirtle	11
To a Highland Girl	13
Glen-Almain: or, The Narrow Glen	16
Stepping Westward	18
The Solitary Reaper	19
Address to Kilchurn Castle, upon Loch Awe	20
Rob Roy's Grave	23
Sonnet, composed at ——— Castle	28
Yarrow Unvisited	29
Sonnet, in the Pass of Killicranky	32
The Matron of Jedborough and her Husband	33
Fly, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere dale	36
The Blind Highland Boy	37

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1814.

The Brownie's Cell	48
Composed at Corra Linn, in sight of Wallace's Tower	52

Effusion, in the Pleasure-ground on the Banks of the Bran, near Dunkeld 55
Yarrow Visited, September, 1814 60

POEMS DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY.

Part I.

Composed by the Sea-side, near Calais, August, 1802 . . 64
Is it a reed that 's shaken by the wind 65
Composed near Calais, on the Road leading to Ardres, August 7, 1802 65
I grieved for Buonaparté, with a vain 66
Festivals have I seen that were not names 67
On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic 67
The King of Sweden 68
To Toussaint L'Ouverture 69
We had a female Passenger who came 69
Composed in the Valley near Dover, on the Day of Landing 70
Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood 71
Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland . 71
Written in London, September, 1802 72
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour 73
Great men have been among us ; hands that penned . . 73
It is not to be thought of, that the Flood 74
When I have borne in memory what has tamed 74
One might believe that natural miseries 75
There is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear 76
These times strike moneyed worldlings with dismay . . 76
England! the time has come when thou shouldst wean . 77
When, looking on the present face of things 78
To the Men of Kent, October, 1803 78
What if our numbers barely could defy 79
Lines on the Expected Invasion, 1803 80
Anticipation, October, 1803 81
Another year! — another deadly blow! 81
Ode. Who rises on the banks of Seine 82

Part II.

On a Celebrated Event in Ancient History 85
Upon the same Event 86
To Thomas Clarkson, on the Final Passing of the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave-Trade 86
A Prophecy, February, 1807 87
Composed by the Side of Grasmere Lake . . 88
Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes 88
Composed while the Author was engaged in writing a Tract, occasioned by the Convention of Cintra . . 89
Composed at the same Time and on the same Occasion . 90
Hoffer 90
Advance, come forth from thy Tyrolean ground . . . 91
Feelings of the Tyrolese 92
Alas! what boots the long, laborious quest 92
And is it among rude, untutored Dales 93
O'er the wide earth, on mountain and on plain 93
On the Final Submission of the Tyrolese 94
Hail, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye 95
Say, what is Honor? — 'T is the finest sense 95
The martial courage of a day is vain 96
Brave Schill! by death delivered, take thy flight . 96
Call not the royal Swede unfortunate 97
Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid 98
Is there a power that can sustain and cheer 98
Ah! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor pen 99
In due observance of an ancient rite 99
Feelings of a Noble Biscayan at one of those Funerals . 100
The Oak of Guernica 101
Indignation of a High-minded Spaniard 102
Avaunt all specious pliancy of mind 102
O'erweening Statesmen have full long relied 103
The French and the Spanish Guerillas 104
Spanish Guerillas 104
The power of Armies is a visible thing 105
Here pause: the poet claims at least this praise . . . 106
The French Army in Russia 106
On the same Occasion 108

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze 108
The Germans on the Heights of Hockheim 109
Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright 110
Ode, 1814. — When the soft hand of sleep had closed the latch 111
Feelings of a French Royalist, on the Disinterment of the Remains of the Duc d'Enghien 117
Occasioned by the Battle of Waterloo 117
Siege of Vienna raised by John Sobieski 118
Occasioned by the Battle of Waterloo 119
Emperors and Kings, how oft have temples rung . . . 119
Ode, 1815. — Imagination — ne'er before content . . . 120
Ode. — The Morning of the Day appointed for a General Thanksgiving, January 18, 1816 126

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT, 1820.

Dedication 135
Fish-women. — On Landing at Calais 135
Bruges 136
Bruges 137
Incident at Bruges 137
After visiting the Field of Waterloo 138
Between Namur and Liege 140
Aix-la-Chapelle 140
In the Cathedral at Cologne 141
In a Carriage, upon the Banks of the Rhine 142
Hymn, for the Boatmen, as they approach the Rapids under the Castle of Heidelberg 142
The Source of the Danube 144
On approaching the Staub-bach, Lauterbrunnen . . . 144
The Fall of the Aar, Handec 145
Memorial, near the Outlet of the Lake of Thun . . . 146
Composed in one of the Catholic Cantons 147
After-thought 148
Scene on the Lake of Brientz 148
Engelberg, the Hill of Angels 149
Our Lady of the Snow 150

Effusion, in Presence of the Painted Tower of Tell, at Altorf 152
The Town of Schwytz 154
On hearing the "Ranz des Vaches" on the Top of the Pass of St. Gothard 154
Fort Fuentes 155
The Church of San Salvador, seen from the Lake of Lugano 157
The Italian Itinerant, and the Swiss Goatherd. — Part I. 159
Part II. 162
The Last Supper, by Leonardo da Vinci, in the Refectory of the Convent of Maria della Grazia, Milan . 163
The Eclipse of the Sun, 1820 164
The Three Cottage Girls 168
The Column intended by Buonaparte for a Triumphal Edifice in Milan, now lying by the Way-side in the Simplon Pass 171
Stanzas, composed in the Simplon Pass 172
Echo, upon the Gemmi 173
Processions. Suggested on a Sabbath Morning in the Vale of Chamouny 174
Elegiac Stanzas 177
Sky-Prospect, — from the Plain of France 182
On being stranded near the Harbor of Boulogne . . . 182
After Landing, — The Valley of Dover 183
At Dover 184
Desultory Stanzas 184

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY, 1837.

To Henry Crabb Robinson 189
Musings near Aquapendente 190
The Pine of Monte Mario at Rome 203
At Rome 204
At Rome. — Regrets. — In Allusion to Niebuhr and other Modern Historians 204
Continued 205
Plea for the Historian 206

At Rome 206
Near Rome, in Sight of St. Peter's 207
At Albano 208
Near Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove 208
From the Alban Hills, looking towards Rome 209
Near the Lake of Thrasymene 210
Near the same Lake 210
The Cuckoo at Laverna 211
At the Convent of Camaldoli 215
Continued 216
At the Eremite or Upper Convent of Camaldoli . . . 217
At Vallombrosa 218
At Florence 220
Before the Picture of the Baptist, by Raphael, in the Gallery at Florence 220
At Florence. — From Michael Angelo 221
At Florence. — From Michael Angelo 222
Among the Ruins of a Convent in the Apennines . . . 222
In Lombardy 223
After leaving Italy 224
Continued 224
Composed at Rydal on May Morning, 1838 225
The Pillar of Trajan 226
THE EGYPTIAN MAID: OR, THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER-LILY 229

THE RIVER DUDDON. — A SERIES OF SONNETS.

To the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth 246
Not envying Latian shades, — if yet they throw . . . 249
Child of the clouds! remote from every taint 249
How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone . . . 250
Take, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take 250
Sole listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played . . . 251
Flowers 252
"Change me, some God, into that breathing rose!" . . 252
What aspect bore the Man who roved or fled 253
The Stepping-stones 254

The same Subject 254
The Faëry Chasm 255
Hints for the Fancy 256
Open Prospect 256
O mountain Stream! the Shepherd and his Cot . . . 257
From this deep chasm, where quivering sunbeams play 258
American Tradition 258
Return 259
Seathwaite Chapel 260
Tributary Stream 260
The Plain of Donnerdale 261
Whence that low voice? — A whisper from the heart . 262
Tradition 262
Sheep-washing 263
The Resting-place 264
Methinks 't were no unprecedented feat 264
Return, Content! for fondly I pursued 265
Fallen, and diffused into a shapeless heap 265
Journey renewed 266
No record tells of lance opposed to lance 267
Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce . . 267
The Kirk of Ulpha to the pilgrim's eye 268
Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep 269
Conclusion 269
After-thought 270

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS

Composed (two excepted) during a Tour in Scotland, and on the English Border, in the Autumn of 1831.

The gallant Youth, who may have gained 271
On the Departure of Sir Walter Scott from Abbotsford, for Naples 276
A Place of Burial in the South of Scotland 276
On the Sight of a Manse in the South of Scotland . . 277
Composed in Roslin Chapel, during a Storm 278
The Trosachs 278

The pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute 279
Composed in the Glen of Loch Etive 280
Eagles. Composed at Dunollie Castle in the Bay of Oban 280
In the Sound of Mull 281
Suggested at Tyndrum in a Storm 282
The Earl of Breadalbane's Ruined Mansion, and Family Burial-place, near Killin 282
"Rest and be Thankful!" At the Head of Glencroe . 283
Highland Hut 284
The Highland Broach 285
The Brownie 288
To the Planet Venus, an Evening Star. Composed at Loch Lomond 289
Bothwell Castle. Passed unseen, on Account of Stormy Weather 290
Picture of Daniel in the Lion's Den, at Hamilton Palace 291
The Avon. A Feeder of the Annan 291
Suggested by a View from an Eminence in Inglewood Forest 292
Hart's-Horn Tree, near Penrith 293
Fancy and Tradition 293
Countess' Pillar 294
Roman Antiquities. From the Roman Station at Old Penrith 295
Apology for the foregoing Poems 296

Notes 298

VOL. IV.

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE; OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS. — Dedication 1
Canto I. 4
Canto II. 16
Canto III. 25
Canto IV. 37

Canto V. 45
Canto VI. 52
Canto VII. 59

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

PART I. — FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION.

Introduction 72
Conjectures 73
Trepidation of the Druids 74
Druidical Excommunication 74
Uncertainty 75
Persecution 76
Recovery 76
Temptations from Roman Refinements 77
Dissensions 78
Struggle of the Britons against the Barbarians 78
Saxon Conquest 79
Monastery of Old Bangor 80
Casual Incitement 80
Glad Tidings 81
Paulinus 82
Persuasion 82
Conversion 83
Apology 84
Primitive Saxon Clergy 84
Other Influences 85
Seclusion 86
Continued 86
Reproof 87
Saxon Monasteries, and Lights and Shades of the Religion 88
Missions and Travels 88
Alfred 89
His Descendants 90
Influence abused 90

Danish Conquests 91
Canute 92
The Norman Conquest 92
Coldly we spake. The Saxons, overpowered 93
The Council of Clermont 94
Crusades 94
Richard I. 95
An Interdict 96
Papal Abuses 96
Scene in Venice 97
Papal Dominion 98

PART II. — TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

How soon, alas! did Man, created pure 98
From false assumption rose, and, fondly hailed 99
Cistertian Monastery 100
Deplorable his lot who tills the ground 100
Monks and Schoolmen 101
Other Benefits 102
Continued 102
Crusaders 103
As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest 104
Where long and deeply hath been fixed the root . . . 104
Transubstantiation 105
The Vaudois 105
Praised be the Rivers, from their mountain springs . . 106
Waldenses 107
Archbishop Chichely to Henry V. 107
Wars of York and Lancaster 108
Wicliffe 109
Corruptions of the Higher Clergy 109
Abuse of Monastic Power 110
Monastic Voluptuousness 111
Dissolution of the Monasteries 111
The same Subject 112
Continued 113

Saints 113
The Virgin 114
Apology 114
Imaginative Regrets 115
Reflections 116
Translation of the Bible 116
The Point at Issue 117
Edward VI. 118
Edward signing the Warrant for the Execution of Joan of Kent 118
Revival of Popery 119
Latimer and Ridley 120
Cranmer 120
General View of the Troubles of the Reformation . . 121
English Reformers in Exile 122
Elizabeth 122
Eminent Reformers 123
The Same 124
Distractions 124
Gunpowder Plot 125
Illustration. The Jung-Frau and the Fall of the Rhine near Schaffhausen 126
Troubles of Charles the First 126
Laud 127
Afflictions of England 128

PART III. — FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

I saw the figure of a lovely Maid 128
Patriotic Sympathies 129
Charles the Second 130
Latitudinarianism 130
Walton's Book of Lives 131
Clerical Integrity 132
Persecution of the Scottish Covenanters 132
Acquittal of the Bishops 133
William the Third 134

Obligations of Civil to Religious Liberty 134
Sacheverel 135
Down a swift stream, thus far, a bold design 135
ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA.
I. The Pilgrim Fathers 136
II. Continued 137
III. Concluded. — American Episcopacy 137
Bishops and Priests, blessèd are ye, if deep 138
Places of Worship 139
Pastoral Character 139
The Liturgy 140
Baptism 141
Sponsors 141
Catechizing 142
Confirmation 143
Confirmation, Continued 143
Sacrament 144
The Marriage Ceremony 144
Thanksgiving after Childbirth 145
Visitation of the Sick 146
The Commination Service 146
Forms of Prayer at Sea 147
Funeral Service 148
Rural Ceremony 148
Regrets 149
Mutability 150
Old Abbeys 150
Emigrant French Clergy 151
Congratulation 152
New Churches 152
Church to be erected 153
Continued 154
New Churchyard 154
Cathedrals, etc. 155
Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge 156
The Same 156
Continued 157
Ejaculation 158
Conclusion 159

EVENING VOLUNTARIES.

Calm is the fragrant air, and loth to lose 160
On a High Part of the Coast of Cumberland 161
By the Sea-side 162
Not in the lucid intervals of life 164
By the Side of Rydal Mere 165
Soft as a cloud is yon blue Ridge, — the Mere 167
The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill . . . 168
The sun has long been set 170
Composed upon an Evening of extraordinary Splendor and Beauty 170
Composed by the Sea-shore 174
The Crescent-moon, the Star of Love 175
To the Moon. (Composed by the Sea-side, on the Coast of Cumberland) 175
To the Moon. Rydal 178
To Lucca Giordano 180
Who but is pleased to watch the moon on high . . . 181
Where lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's creed . . 182

POEMS, COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR, IN THE SUMMER OF 1833.

Adieu, Rydalian Laurels! that have grown 183
Why should the Enthusiast, journeying through this Isle 184
They called thee MERRY ENGLAND, in old time . . . 184
To the River Greta, near Keswick 185
To the River Derwent 186
In Sight of the Town of Cockermouth 186
Address from the Spirit of Cockermouth Castle . . . 187
Nun's Well, Brigham 188
To a Friend. (On the Banks of the Derwent) . . . 188
Mary Queen of Scots. (Landing at the Mouth of the Derwent, Workington) 189
Stanzas suggested in a Steamboat off St. Bees' Heads, on the Coast of Cumberland 190
In the Channel, between the Coast of Cumberland and the Isle of Man 191

At Sea off the Isle of Man 197
Desire we past illusions to recall? 197
On entering Douglas Bay, Isle of Man 198
By the Sea-shore, Isle of Man 199
Isle of Man 200
Isle of Man 200
By a Retired Mariner. (A Friend of the Author) . . 201
At Bala-Sala, Isle of Man. (Supposed to be written by a Friend) 202
Tynwald Hill 202
Despond who will, — *I* heard a voice exclaim 203
In the Frith of Clyde, Ailsa Crag. (During an Eclipse of the Sun, July 17) 204
On the Frith of Clyde. (In a Steamboat) 204
On revisiting Dunolly Castle 205
The Dunolly Eagle 206
Written in a Blank Leaf of Macpherson's Ossian . . . 206
Cave of Staffa 209
Cave of Staffa. After the Crowd had departed . . . 210
Cave of Staffa 211
Flowers on the Top of the Pillars at the Entrance of the Cave 211
Iona 212
Iona. Upon Landing 213
The Black Stones of Iona 214
Homeward we turn. Isle of Columba's Cell 214
Greenock 215
"There!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride . 216
The River Eden, Cumberland 216
Monument of Mrs. Howard, (by Nollekens,) in Wetheral Church, near Corby, on the Banks of the Eden . . 217
Suggested by the foregoing 218
Nunnery 218
Steamboats, Viaducts, and Railways 219
The Monument commonly called Long Meg and her Daughters, near the River Eden 220
Lowther 221
To the Earl of Lonsdale 221
The Somnambulist 221

To Cordelia M——, Hallsteads, Ullswater 228
Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes 229

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION.

Expostulation and Reply 230
The Tables Turned. An Evening Scene on the same Subject 232
Lines written in Early Spring 233
A Character 234
To my Sister 235
Simon Lee, the Old Huntsman: with an Incident in which he was concerned 237
Written in Germany, on one of the Coldest Days of the Century 241
A Poet's Epitaph 243
To the Daisy 246
Matthew 247
The Two April Mornings 248
The Fountain. A Conversation 251
Personal Talk 254
Illustrated Books and Newspapers 257
To the Spade of a Friend. (An Agriculturist.) Composed while we were laboring together in his Pleasure-Ground 257
A Night Thought 259
Incident characteristic of a Favorite Dog 260
Tribute to the Memory of the same Dog 262
Fidelity 263
Ode to Duty 266
Character of the Happy Warrior 268
The Force of Prayer; or, The Founding of Bolton Priory. A Tradition 271
A Fact, and an Imagination; or, Canute and Alfred, on the Sea-shore 274
A little onward lend thy guiding hand 276
Ode to Lycoris 279
To the same 281

The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields 283
Upon the same Occasion 284
Memory 287
This Lawn, a carpet all alive 288
Humanity 289
The unremitting voice of nightly streams 293
Thoughts on the Seasons 294
To ——, upon the Birth of her First-born Child, March, 1833 295
The Warning. A Sequel to the foregoing 298
If this great world of joy and pain 304
The Laborer's Noonday Hymn 305
Ode, composed on May Morning 306
To May 309
Lines suggested by a Portrait from the Pencil of F. Stone 313
The foregoing Subject resumed 318
So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive 319
Upon seeing a Colored Drawing of the Bird of Paradise in an Album 320

SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER.

Composed after reading a Newspaper of the Day . . . 323
Upon the late General Fast. March, 1832 324
Said Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud 324
Blest Statesman he, whose Mind's unselfish will . . . 325
In Allusion to various recent Histories and Notices of the French Revolution 325
Continued 326
Concluded 327
Men of the Western World! in Fate's dark book . . . 327
To the Pennsylvanians 328
At Bologna, in Remembrance of the late Insurrections, 1837 328
Continued 329
Concluded 330
Young England, — what is then become of Old . . . 330
Peel for the wrongs to universal ken 331

SONNETS UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

Suggested by the View of Lancaster Castle (on the Road from the South) 332
Tenderly do we feel by Nature's law 333
The Roman Consul doomed his sons to die 333
Is *Death*, when evil against good has fought 334
Not to the object specially designed 334
Ye brood of conscience, Spectres! that frequent . . 335
Before the world had passed her time of youth . 336
Fit retribution, by the moral code 336
Though to give timely warning and deter 337
Our bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine . . . 337
Ah! think how one compelled for life to abide 338
See the Condemned alone within his cell 339
Conclusion 339
Apology 340

NOTES 341

VOL. V.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Epistle to Sir George Howland Beaumont, Bart. From the Southwest Coast of Cumberland. — 1811 . . . 1
Upon perusing the foregoing Epistle Thirty Years after its Composition 12
Gold and Silver Fishes in a Vase 13
Liberty. (Sequel to the Preceding.) [Addressed to a Friend; the Gold and Silver Fishes having been removed to a Pool in the Pleasure-Ground of Rydal Mount.] 15
Poor Robin 21
The Gleaner. (Suggested by a Picture) 22
To a Redbreast — (in Sickness) 24
I know an aged Man constrained to dwell 27

Sonnet. (To an Octogenarian) 26
Floating Island 27
How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high 28
Once I could hail (howe'er serene the sky) 28
To the Lady Fleming, on seeing the Foundation preparing for the Erection of Rydal Chapel, Westmoreland . . 30
On the same Occasion 35
The Horn of Egremont Castle 36
Goody Blake and Harry Gill. A true Story 41
Prelude, prefixed to the Volume entitled "Poems chiefly of Early and Late Years" 46
To a Child. Written in her Album 48
Lines written in the Album of the Countess of Lonsdale. Nov. 5, 1834 48
Grace Darling 52
The Russian Fugitive. — Part I. 56
Part II. 59
Part III. 62
Part IV. 65

INSCRIPTIONS.

In the Grounds of Coleorton, the Seat of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Leicestershire 70
In a Garden of the Same 71
Written at the Request of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., and in his Name, for an Urn, placed by him at the Termination of a newly planted Avenue, in the same Grounds 73
For a Seat in the Groves of Coleorton 73
Written with a Pencil upon a Stone in the Wall of the House (an Out-house), on the Island at Grasmere . 74
Written with a Slate Pencil on a Stone, on the Side of the Mountain of Black Comb 75
Written with a Slate Pencil upon a Stone, the largest of a Heap lying near a deserted Quarry, upon one of the Islands at Rydal 78
In these fair vales hath many a Tree 79

The massy Ways, carried across these heights 78
Inscriptions supposed to be found in and near a Hermit's Cell.
I. — Hopes, what are they? — Beads of morning . 79
II. — Inscribed upon a Rock 81
III. — Hast thou seen, with flash incessant 82
IV. — Near the Spring of the Hermitage 83
V. — Not seldom, clad in radiant vest 83
For the Spot where the Hermitage stood on St. Herbert's Island, Derwent-Water 84
On the Banks of a Rocky Stream 86

SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER, MODERNIZED.

The Prioress' Tale 87
The Cuckoo and the Nightingale 97
Troilus and Cresida 112

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE

The Old Cumberland Beggar 119
The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale 126
The Small Celandine 131
The Two Thieves; or, The Last Stage of Avarice . . 132
Animal Tranquillity and Decay 134

EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

Epitaphs translated from Chiabrera.
Weep not, beloved Friends! nor let the air . . . 136
Perhaps some needful service of the State . . . 136
O thou who movest onward with a mind . . . 137
There never breathed a man who, when his life . 138
True is it that Ambrosio Salinero 139
Destined to war from very infancy 140
O flower of all that springs from gentle blood . . 141
Not without heavy grief of heart do we . . 142
Pause, courteous Spirit! — Balbi supplicates . . 143

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came 144
Six months to six years added he remained 145
Cenotaph 145
Epitaph in the Chapel-Yard of Langdale, Westmore and 146
Address to the Scholars of the Village School of —— 147
Elegiac Stanzas, suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle, in a Storm, painted by Sir George Beaumont . . 150
To the Daisy 153
Elegiac Verses, in Memory of my Brother, John Wordsworth, Commander of the E. I. Company's Ship, the Earl of Abergavenny, in which he perished by a Calamitous Shipwreck, Feb. 6, 1805 156
Sonnet 159
Lines composed at Grasmere, during a Walk one Evening, after a Stormy Day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the Dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected 160
Invocation to the Earth. February, 1816 161
Lines written on a Blank Leaf in a Copy of the Author's Poem "The Excursion," upon hearing of the Death of the late Vicar of Kendal 162
Elegiac Stanzas. (Addressed to Sir G. H. B. upon the Death of his Sister-in-Law) 163
Elegiac Musings in the Grounds of Coleorton Hall, the Seat of the late Sir G. H. Beaumont, Bart. . . . 166
Written after the Death of Charles Lamb 168
Extempore Effusion upon the Death of James Hogg . . 173
Inscription for a Monument in Crosthwaite Church, in the Vale of Keswick 175
ODE. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood 177

NOTES 184

APPENDIX, PREFACES, ETC., ETC.

Preface to the Second Edition of several of the foregoing Poems, published, with an additional Volume, under the Title of "Lyrical Ballads" 189

Appendix 227
Essay, supplementary to the Preface 235
Dedication, prefixed to the Edition of 1815 278
Preface to the Edition of 1815 280
Postscript 303
Index to the Poems 339
Index to the First Lines 349

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

1803.

I.

DEPARTURE

FROM THE VALE OF GRASMERE. AUGUST, 1803.

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains
Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;
Even for the tenants of the zone that lies
Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,
Methinks 't would heighten joy, to overleap
At will the crystal battlements, and peep
Into some other region, though less fair,
To see how things are made and managed there.
Change for the worse might please, incursion bold
Into the tracts of darkness and of cold;
O'er Limbo Lake with aëry flight to steer
And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.
Such animation often do I find,
Power in my breast, wings growing in my mind,
Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,
Perchance without one look behind me cast,

Some barrier with which Nature, from the birth
Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on earth.
O pleasant transit, Grasmere! to resign
Such happy fields, abodes so calm as thine;
Not like an outcast with himself at strife;
The slave of business, time, or care for life,
But moved by choice; or, if constrained in part,
Yet still with Nature's freedom at the heart; —
To cull contentment upon wildest shores,
And luxuries extract from bleakest moors;
With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,
And having rights in all that we behold.
Then why these lingering steps? — A bright adieu
For a brief absence, proves that love is true;
Ne'er can the way be irksome or forlorn
That winds into itself for sweet return.

II.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

1803.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold:
As vapors breathed from dungeons cold
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear?
As if it were thyself that 's here,
I shrink with pain;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight, — nor press on weight! — away
Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to stay
With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
Rose like a star that, touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they now? —
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone

Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends, —
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw seen, —
Neighbors we were, and loving friends
We might have been;

True friends, though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;
Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment — even so —
Might we together
Have sat and talked where gowans blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast!
But why go on? —

Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight!
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harbored where none can be misled,
Wronged, or distrest;
And surely here it may be said
That such are blest.

And oh! for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked ofttimes in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place
Where Man is laid
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
For which it prayed!

Sighing, I turned away; but ere
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear
Music that sorrow comes not near,—
A ritual hymn,
Chanted in love that casts out fear
By Seraphim.

III.

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF NITH NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
That must have followed when his brow
Was wreathed — "The Vision" tells us how —
With holly spray,
He faltered, drifted to and fro,
And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
Our minds when, lingering all too long,
Over the grave of Burns we hung
In social grief, —
Indulged as if it were a wrong
To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
And prompt to welcome every gleam
Of good and fair,
Let us beside this limpid Stream
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight;
Think rather of those moments bright,
When to the consciousness of right
His course was true,

When Wisdom prospered in his sight
And Virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
Freely as in youth's season bland,
When, side by side, his Book in hand,
We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod
These pathways, yon far-stretching road!
There lurks his home; in that Abode,
With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly pensive mood,
The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,
Before it humbly let us pause,
And ask of Nature, from what cause
And by what rules
She trained her Burns to win applause
That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashes of his pen;
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when
Bees fill their hives:
Deep in the general heart of men
His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
From genuine springs,
Shall dwell together till old Time
Folds up his wings?

Sweet Mercy! to the gates of Heaven
This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven;
The rueful conflict, the heart riven
With vain endeavor,
And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,
Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
On the frail heart the purest share
With all that live? —
The best of what we do and are,
Just God, forgive! *

* See note.

IV.

TO THE SONS OF BURNS,

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR FATHER.

"The Poet's grave is in a corner of the churchyard. We looked at it with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses, —

'Is there a man whose judgment clear,' &c."

Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-traveller.

'Mid crowded obelisks and urns
I sought the untimely grave of Burns;
Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
With sorrow true,
And more would grieve, but that it turns
Trembling to you!

Through twilight shades of good and ill
Ye now are panting up life's hill,
And more than common strength and skill
Must ye display,
If ye would give the better will
Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear
Intemperance with less harm, beware
But if the Poet's wit ye share, —
Like him can speed
The social hour, — of tenfold care
There will be need;

For honest men delight will take
To spare your failings for his sake,
Will flatter you, — and fool and rake
Your steps pursue;
And of your Father's name will make
A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
And add your voices to the choir
That sanctify the cottage fire
With service meet;
There seek the genius of your Sire,
His spirit greet;

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and hows,"
He paid to Nature tuneful vows;
Or wiped his honorable brows
Bedewed with toil,
While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
Upturned the soil;

His judgment with benignant ray
Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way;
But ne'er to a seductive lay
Let faith be given;
Nor deem that "light which leads astray
Is light from Heaven."

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;
Be independent, generous, brave;

Your Father such example gave,
And such revere;
But be admonished by his grave,
And think, and fear!

V.

ELLEN IRWIN:

OR, THE BRAES OF KIRTLE.*

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sat
Upon the braes of Kirtle,
Was lovely as a Grecian maid
Adorned with wreaths of myrtle;
Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,
And there did they beguile the day
With love and gentle speeches,
Beneath the budding beeches.

From many knights and many squires
The Bruce had been selected;
And Gordon, fairest of them all,
By Ellen was rejected.
Sad tidings to that noble Youth!
For it may be proclaimed with truth,

* The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place.

If Bruce hath loved sincerely,
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,
His shattered hopes and crosses,
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,
Reclined on flowers and mosses?
Alas that ever he was born!
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,
Sees them and their caressing;
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts
That through his brain are travelling,
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce
He launched a deadly javelin!
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,
And, starting up to meet the same,
Did with her body cover
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,
Thus from the heart of her True-love
The mortal spear repelling.
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain,
And fought with rage incessant
Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days, and many months,
And many years ensuing,
This wretched Knight did vainly seek
The death that he was wooing.
So, coming his last help to crave,
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave
His body he extended,
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard
The tale I have been telling,
May in Kirkonnel churchyard view
The grave of lovely Ellen:
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid;
And, for the stone upon his head,
May no rude hand deface it,
And its forlorn *Hic jacet!*

VI.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

(At Inversneyde, upon Loch Lomond.)

Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head:
And these gray rocks; that household lawn;
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;

This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake;
This little bay; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode, —
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
But, O fair Creature! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless thee, Vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart;
God shield thee to thy latest years!
Thee neither know I, nor thy peers;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away:
For never saw I mien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and homebred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered, like a random seed,
Remote from men, thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness:
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer:
A face with gladness overspread!
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred!

And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech:
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life!
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess!
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality:
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighborhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy elder Brother I would be,
Thy Father, — anything to thee

Now thanks to Heaven that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.

Joy have I had; and going hence
I bear away my recompense.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:
Then, why should I be loth to stir?
I feel this place was made for her;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part;
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
And thee, the Spirit of them all!

VII.

GLEN-ALMAIN:

OR, THE NARROW GLEN.

In this still place, remote from men,
Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;
In this still place, where murmurs on
But one meek streamlet, only one:
He sang of battles, and the breath
Of stormy war, and violent death;

And should, methinks, when all was past,
Have rightfully been laid at last
Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
As by a spirit turbulent;
Where sights were rough and sounds were wild,
And everything unreconciled;
In some complaining, dim retreat,
For fear and melancholy meet;
But this is calm; there cannot be
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed?
Or is it but a groundless creed?
What matters it?—I blame them not
Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot
Was moved; and in such way expressed
Their notion of its perfect rest.
A convent, even a hermit's cell,
Would break the silence of this Dell:
It is not quiet, it is not ease;
But something deeper far than these:
The separation that is here
Is of the grave; and of austere
Yet happy feelings of the dead:
And therefore was it rightly said
That Ossian, last of all his race!
Lies buried in this lonely place

VIII.

STEPPING WESTWARD.

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward?"

"*What, you are stepping westward?*" — "*Yea.*"
— 'T would be a *wildish* destiny,
If we, who thus together roam
In a strange Land, and far from home,
Were in this place the guests of Chance:
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
Behind, all gloomy to behold;
And stepping westward seemed to be
A kind of *heavenly* destiny:
I liked the greeting; 't was a sound
Of something without place or bound;
And seemed to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
Was walking by her native lake:

The salutation had to me
The very sound of courtesy:
Its power was felt; and while my eye
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
The echo of the voice inwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way.

IX.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? —
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; —
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

X.

ADDRESS

TO KILCHURN CASTLE, UPON LOCH AWE.

"From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view, — a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water, — mists rested upon the mountain-side, with spots o

sunshine; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately, — not dismantled of turrets, nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin." — *Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream
Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest
Is come, and thou art silent in thy age;
Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds are caught
Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.
O there is life that breathes not! Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick, in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of. What art thou, from care
Cast off, abandoned by thy rugged Sire,
Nor by soft Peace adopted; though, in place
And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem
But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills
Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm,)
Yet he, not loth, in favor of thy claims
To reverence, suspends his own; submitting
All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
All that he holds in common with the stars,
To the memorial majesty of Time
Impersonated in thy calm decay!
Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unreproved!
Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light
Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,

Do thou, in turn, be paramount; and rule
Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods unite
To pay thee homage; and with these are joined,
In willing admiration and respect,
Two Hearts, which in thy presence might be called
Youthful as Spring. — Shade of departed Power,
Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,
The chronicle were welcome that should call
Into the compass of distinct regard
The toils and struggles of thy infant years!
Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice;
Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,
Frozen by distance; so, majestic Pile,
To the perception of this Age, appear
Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued
And quieted in character, — the strife,
The pride, the fury uncontrollable,
Lost on the aërial heights of the Crusades! *

* The tradition is, that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

XI.

ROB ROY'S GRAVE.

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold like burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,
The English ballad-singer's joy!
And Scotland has a thief as good,
An outlaw of as daring mood;
She has her brave ROB ROY!
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
And let us chant a passing stave,
In honor of that Hero brave!

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart
And wondrous length and strength of arm:
Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave;
Forgive me if the phrase be strong;—
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave;
As wise in thought as bold in deed:
For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, "What need of books?
Burn all the statutes and their shelves:
They stir us up against our kind;
And worse, against ourselves.

"We have a passion, — make a law,
Too false to guide us or control!
And for the law itself we fight
In bitterness of soul.

"And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
Distinctions that are plain and few:
These find I graven on my heart:
That tells me what to do.

"The creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel on the wind!
With them no strife can last; they live
In peace, and peace of mind.

"For why? — because the good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

"A lesson that is quickly learned,
A signal this which all can see!
Thus nothing here provokes the strong
To wanton cruelty.

"All freakishness of mind is checked;
He tamed, who foolishly aspires;
While to the measure of his might
Each fashions his desires.

"All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit:
'T is God's appointment who must sway,
And who is to submit.

"Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
And longest life is but a day;
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
I 'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,
Through summer heat and winter snow
The Eagle, he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below.

So was it, — *would*, at least, have been
But through untowardness of fate;
For Polity was then too strong, —
He came an age too late;

Or shall we say an age too soon?
For, were the bold Man living *now*,
How might he flourish in his pride,
With buds on every bough!

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
Would all have seemed but paltry things,
Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
To these few meagre Vales confined;
But thought how wide the world, the times
How fairly to his mind!

And to his Sword he would have said,
"Do thou my sovereign will enact
From land to land through half the earth!
Judge thou of law and fact!

"'T is fit that we should do our part,
Becoming that mankind should learn
That we are not to be surpassed
In fatherly concern.

"Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough;—
We 'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff.

"I, too, will have my kings, that take
From me the sign of life and death:
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds
Obedient to my breath."

And if the word had been fulfilled,
As *might* have been, then, thought of joy!
France would have had her present Boast,
And we our own Rob Roy!

O, say not so! compare them not;
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave!
Would wrong thee nowhere; least of all
Here standing by thy grave.

For thou, although with some wild thoughts,
Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan!
Hadst this to boast of: thou didst love
The *liberty* of man.

And had it been thy lot to live
With us who now behold the light,
Thou wouldst have nobly stirred thyself,
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand;
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
Alone upon Loch Vool's heights,
And by Loch Lomond's braes.

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same;
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,
At sound of Rob Roy's name.

XII.

SONNET.

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE.

Degenerate Douglas! O the unworthy Lord!
Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
And love of havoc, (for with such disease
Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word
To level with the dust a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
Beggared and outraged! — Many hearts deplored
The fate of those old Trees; and oft with pain
The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed
For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
And the green, silent pastures, yet remain.

XIII.

YARROW UNVISITED.

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning,

> "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
> Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow!"

FROM Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled;
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"
"Whate'er betide, we 'll turn aside,
And see the braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, 't is their own;
Each maiden to her dwelling!
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There 's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us;

And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus;
There 's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow:
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow?

"What 's Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under?
There are a thousand such elsewhere,
As worthy of your wonder."
Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn
My True-love sighed for sorrow;
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"O, green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,*
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,
We 'll wander Scotland thorough;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and homebred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;

* See Hamilton's Ballad as above

The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow!
We will not see them; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow;
Enough, if in our hearts we know
There 's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!
It must, or we shall rue it:
We have a vision of our own;
Ah! why should we undo it?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We 'll keep them, winsome Marrow!
For when we 're there, although 't is fair,
'T will be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come,
And wandering seem but folly, —
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy, —
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
'T will soothe us in our sorrow,
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

XIV.

SONNET.

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY,

An invasion being expected, October, 1803.

Six thousand veterans, practised in war's game,
Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
Shepherds and herdsmen. — Like a whirlwind came
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
Of the dead bodies. — 'T was a day of shame
For them whom precept and the pedantry
Of cold, mechanic battle do enslave.
O for a single hour of that Dundee,
Who on that day the word of onset gave!
Like conquest would the Men of England see;
And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

XV.

THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND.

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers,
And call a train of laughing Hours;
And bid them dance, and bid them sing;
And thou, too, mingle in the ring!
Take to thy heart a new delight;
If not, make merry in despite
That there is One who scorns thy power:—
But dance! for under Jedborough Tower
A Matron dwells, who, though she bears
The weight of more than seventy years,
Lives in the light of youthful glee,
And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay! start not at that Figure — there!
Him who is rooted to his chair!
Look at him, — look again! for he
Hath long been of thy family.
With legs that move not, if they can,
And useless arms, a trunk of man,
He sits, and with a vacant eye;
A sight to make a stranger sigh!

Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom:
His world is in this single room:
Is this a place for mirthful cheer?
Can merry-making enter here?

The joyous Woman is the Mate
Of him in that forlorn estate!
He breathes a subterraneous damp;
But bright as Vesper shines her lamp:
He is as mute as Jedborough Tower;
She jocund as it was of yore,
With all its bravery on; in times
When all alive with merry chimes,
Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron! and thy due
Is praise, heroic praise, and true!
With admiration I behold
Thy gladness unsubdued and bold:
Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
The picture of a life well spent:
This do I see; and something more;
A strength unthought of heretofore:
Delighted am I for thy sake;
And yet a higher joy partake:
Our Human-nature throws away
Its second twilight, and looks gay;
A land of promise and of pride
Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

An! see her helpless Charge! inclosed
Within himself as seems, composed;
To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
The strife of happiness and pain,
Utterly dead! yet in the guise
Of little infants, when their eyes
Begin to follow to and fro
The persons that before them go,
He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
Her buoyant spirit can prevail
Where common cheerfulness would fail;
She strikes upon him with the heat
Of July suns; he feels it sweet;
An animal delight, though dim!
'T is all that now remains for him!

The more I looked, I wondered more. —
And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,
Some inward trouble suddenly
Broke from the Matron's strong black eye —
A remnant of uneasy light,
A flash of something over-bright!
Nor long this mystery did detain
My thoughts; — she told in pensive strain
That she had borne a heavy yoke,
Been stricken by a twofold stroke;
Ill health of body; and had pined
Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it! — but let praise ascend
To Him who is our lord and friend!

Who from disease and suffering
Hath called for thee a second spring;
Repaid thee for that sore distress
By no untimely joyousness;
Which makes of thine a blissful state,
And cheers thy melancholy Mate!

XVI.

Fly, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere dale!
Say that we come, and come by this day's light;
Fly upon swiftest wing round field and height,
But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale;
There let a mystery of joy prevail,
The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,
And Rover whine, as at a second sight
Of near-approaching good that shall not fail:
And from that infant's face let joy appear;
Yea, let our Mary's one companion child —
That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
With intimations manifold and dear,
While we have wandered over wood and wild —
Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

XVII.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY.

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRESIDE, AFTER RETURNING TO THE VALE OF GRASMERE.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,
Have romped enough, my little Boy!
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
And you shall bring your stool and rest;
This corner is your own.

There! take your seat, and let me see
That you can listen quietly:
And, as I promised, I will tell
That strange adventure which befell
A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland* Boy! — why call him so?
Because, my Darlings, ye must know
That, under hills which rise like towers,
Far higher hills than these of ours!
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight, —
The sun, the day; the stars, the night;
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined.
Nor had a melancholy mind;
For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
Her other children him did love:
For was she here, or was she there,
She thought of him with constant care,
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when clad
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
And bonnet with a feather gay,
To Kirk he on the Sabbath-day
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog, too, had he; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow,—
And thus from house to house would go
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none made sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream;
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small, like ours, a peaceful flood;
But one of mighty size, and strange;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way,
Through long, long windings of the hills,
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came, —
Returns, on errand still the same;
This did it when the earth was new;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that safely ride
Between the woods and lofty rocks;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
The blind Boy always had his share;
Whether of mighty towns, or vales
With warmer suns and softer gales,
Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
When from the water-side he heard
The shouting, and the jolly cheers;
The bustle of the mariners
In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail?
For he must never handle sail;
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
What sin would be upon her head
If she should suffer this: "My Son,
Whate'er you do, leave this undone;
The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side,
Still sounding with the sounding tide,
And heard the billows leap and dance,
Without a shadow of mischance,
Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
Ye soon shall know how this befell)
He in a vessel of his own,
On the swift flood is hurrying down,
Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more
May human creature leave the shore!
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind Mariner!
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him? — Ye have seen
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright;
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men
Spread round that haven in the glen;
Each hut, perchance, might have its own;
And to the Boy they were all known, —
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell
Which he, poor child, had studied well;
A shell of ample size, and light
As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
That sportive dolphins drew.

And, as a Coracle that braves
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,
This shell upon the deep would swim,
And gaily lift its fearless brim
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew:
And he a story strange, yet true,
Had heard, how in a shell like this
An English Boy, O thought of bliss!
Had stoutly launched from shore;

Launched from the margin of a bay
Among the Indian isles, where lay
His father's ship, and had sailed far,
To join that gallant ship of war,
In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
The house that held this prize; and, led
By choice or chance, did thither come
One day when no one was at home,
And found the door unbarred.

While there he sat, alone and blind,
That story flashed upon his mind;—
A bold thought roused him, and he took
The shell from out its secret nook,
And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel, — and in pride
Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,
Stepped into it, — his thoughts all free
As the light breezes that with glee
Sang through the adventurer's hair.

Awhile he stood upon his feet;
He felt the motion, — took his seat;
Still better pleased, as more and more
The tide retreated from the shore,
And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.
How rapidly the Child is driven!
The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
He thus had gone, ere he was seen
By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, O me!
What shrieking and what misery!
For many saw; among the rest
His Mother, she who loved him best,
She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the Child, the sightless Boy,
It is the triumph of his joy!
The bravest traveller in balloon,
Mounting as if to reach the moon,
Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay!
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
Are stifled, — all is still.

And quickly, with a silent crew,
A boat is ready to pursue;
And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace;
So have ye seen the fowler chase,
On Grasmere's clear, unruffled breast,
A youngling of the wild-duck's nest,
With deftly lifted oar;

Or as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell
Erewhile within the dancing shell,
They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near;
But in his darkness he can hear,
And guesses their intent.

"*Lei-gha*,—*Lei-gha*,"—he then cried out,
"*Lei-gha*,—*Lei-gha*,"—with eager shout;
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
And what he meant was, "Keep away,
And leave me to myself!"

Alas! and when he felt their hands——
You 've often heard of magic wands,
That with a motion overthrow
A palace of the proudest show,
Or melt it into air:

So all his dreams,—that inward light
With which his soul had shone so bright,—
All vanished;—'t was a heartfelt cross
To him, a heavy, bitter loss,
As he had ever known.

But hark! a gratulating voice,
With which the very hills rejoice:
'T is from the crowd, who tremblingly
Have watched the event, and now can see
That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,
Full sure they were a happy band,
Which, gathering round, did on the banks
Of that great Water give God thanks,
And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart
The blind Boy's little dog took part;
He leapt about, and oft did kiss
His master's hands in sign of bliss,
With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,
She who had fainted with her fear,
Rejoiced when waking she espies
The Child; when she can trust her eyes,
And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
When he was in the house again:
Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes;
She kissed him, — how could she chastise?
She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved;
And, though his fancies had been wild,
Yet he was pleased and reconciled
To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell;
And long the story will repeat
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,
And how he was preserved.

Note. — It is recorded in Dampier's Voyages, that a boy, son of the captain of a Man-of-War, seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually intrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eyewitness

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

1814.

I.

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND, A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED THE NAME OF

THE BROWNIE'S CELL.

I.

To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking fen,
Or depth of labyrinthine glen;
Or into trackless forest set
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met;
World-wearied Men withdrew of yore,
(Penance their trust, and prayer their store,)
And in the wilderness were bound
To such apartments as they found,
Or with a new ambition raised,
That God might suitably be praised.

II.

High lodged the *Warrior*, like a bird of prey,
Or where broad waters round him lay:

But this wild Ruin is no ghost
Of his devices, — buried, lost!
Within this little, lonely isle
There stood a consecrated Pile;
Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,
For them whose timid Spirits clung
To mortal succor, though the tomb
Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom!

III

Upon those servants of another world
When madding Power her bolts had hurled,
Their habitation shook; — it fell,
And perished, save one narrow cell;
Whither, at length, a Wretch retired,
Who neither grovelled nor aspired:
He, struggling in the net of pride,
The future scorned, the past defied;
Still tempering, from the unguilty forge
Of vain conceit, an iron scourge!

IV.

Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,
Who stood and flourished face to face
With their perennial hills; — but Crime,
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,
Brought low a Power, which from its home
Burst, when repose grew wearisome
And, taking impulse from the sword,
And mocking its own plighted word,

Had found, in ravage widely dealt,
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt!

V.

All, all were dispossessed, save him whose smile
Shot lightning through this lonely Isle!
No right had he but what he made
To this small spot, his leafy shade;
But the ground lay within that ring
To which he only dared to cling;
Renouncing here, as worse than dead,
The craven few who bowed the head
Beneath the change; who heard a claim
How loud! yet lived in peace with shame.

VI.

From year to year this shaggy Mortal went
(So seemed it) down a strange descent:
Till they, who saw his outward frame,
Fixed on him an unhallowed name;
Him, free from all malicious taint,
And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,
A pen unwearied, to indite,
In this lone Isle, the dreams of night;
Impassioned dreams, that strove to span
The faded glories of his Clan!

VII.

Suns that through blood their western harbor sought
And stars that in their courses fought;

Towers rent, winds combating with woods,
Lands deluged by unbridled floods;
And beast and bird that from the spell
Of sleep took import terrible; —
These types mysterious (if the show
Of battle and the routed foe
Had failed) would furnish an array
Of matter for the dawning day!

VIII.

How disappeared He? — ask the newt and toad,
Inheritors of his abode;
The otter crouching undisturbed,
In her dank cleft; — but be thou curbed,
O froward Fancy! 'mid a scene
Of aspect winning and serene;
For those offensive creatures shun
The inquisition of the sun!
And in this region flowers delight,
And all is lovely to the sight.

IX.

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,
When she applies her annual test
To dead and living; when her breath
Quickens, as now, the withered heath; —
Nor flaunting Summer, when he throws
His soul into the brier-rose;
Or calls the lily from her sleep
Prolonged beneath the bordering deep;

Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren
Is warbling near the BROWNIE'S Den.

x.

Wild Relique! beauteous as the chosen spot
In Nysa's isle, the embellished grot;
Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,
(High Servant of paternal Love,)
Young Bacchus was conveyed, — to lie
Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye;
Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage glowed,
Close crowding round the infant god;
All colors, — and the liveliest streak
A foil to his celestial cheek!

II.

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN,

IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER.

"— How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the name
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild-flower,
All over his dear Country; left the deeds
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,
To people the steep rocks and river-banks,
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul
Of independence and stern liberty." — *MS.*

LORD of the vale! astounding Flood;
The dullest leaf in this thick wood

Quakes, conscious of thy power;
The caves reply with hollow moan;
And vibrates, to its central stone,
Yon time-cemented Tower!

And yet how fair the rural scene!
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been
Beneficent as strong;
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep
The little, trembling flowers that peep
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love
To look on thee, — delight to rove
Where they thy voice can hear;
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,
Lord of the vale! to Heroes laid
In dust, that voice is dear!

Along thy banks, at dead of night,
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight;
Or stands, in warlike vest,
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,
A Champion worthy of the stream,
Yon gray tower's living crest!

But clouds and envious darkness hide
A Form not doubtfully descried: —
Their transient mission o'er,
O say to what blind region flee

These Shapes of awful fantasy?
To what untrodden shore?

Less than divine command they spurn;
But this we from the mountains learn,
And this the valleys show;
That never will they deign to hold
Communion where the heart is cold
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain
Shall walk the Marathonian plain;
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,
That still invests the guardian Pass,
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas
Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,
Or kneel, before the votive shrine
By Uri's lake, where Tell
Leapt, from his storm-vext boat, to land,
Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand
That day the Tyrant fell.

III.

EFFUSION,

IN THE PLEASURE GROUND ON THE BANKS OF THE BRAN, NEAR DUNKELD.

"The waterfall, by a loud roaring, warned us when we must expect it. We were first, however, conducted into a small apartment, where the Gardener desired us to look at a picture of Ossian, which, while he was telling the history of the young Artist who executed the work, disappeared, parting in the middle, — flying asunder as by the touch of magic, — and lo! we are at the entrance of a splendid apartment, which was almost dizzy and alive with waterfalls, that tumbled in all directions; the great cascade, opposite the window, which faced us, being reflected in innumerable mirrors upon the ceiling and against the walls." — *Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-Traveller.*

What! he who, 'mid the kindred throng
Of Heroes that inspired his song,
Doth yet frequent the hill of storms,
The stars dim-twinkling through their forms! —
What! Ossian here, — a painted Thrall,
Mute fixture on the stuccoed wall;
To serve, an unsuspected screen,
For show that must not yet be seen;
And, when the moment comes, to part
And vanish by mysterious art;
Head, harp, and body split asunder,
For ingress to a world of wonder;
A gay saloon, with waters dancing
Upon the sight wherever glancing;

One loud cascade in front, and lo!
A thousand like it, white as snow, —
Streams on the walls, and torrent-foam
As active round the hollow dome,
Illusive cataracts! of their terrors
Not stripped, nor voiceless in the mirrors,
That catch the pageant from the flood
Thundering adown a rocky wood.
What pains to dazzle and confound!
What strife of color, shape, and sound
In that quaint medley, that might seem
Devised out of a sick man's dream!
Strange scene, fantastic and uneasy
As ever made a maniac dizzy,
When disenchanted from the mood
That loves on sullen thoughts to brood!

O Nature! — in thy changeful visions,
Through all thy most abrupt transitions
Smooth, graceful, tender, or sublime, —
Ever averse to pantomime,
Thee neither do they know nor us
Thy servants, who can trifle thus;
Else verily the sober powers
Of rock that frowns, and stream that roars,
Exalted by congenial sway
Of Spirits, and the undying Lay,
And Names that moulder not away,
Had wakened some redeeming thought
More worthy of this favored Spot;

Recalled some feeling, to set free
The Bard from such indignity!

The Effigies * of a valiant Wight
I once beheld, a Templar Knight;
Not prostrate, not like those that rest
On tombs, with palms together prest,
But sculptured out of living stone,
And standing upright and alone,
Both hands in rival energy
Employed in setting his sword free
From its dull sheath, — stern sentinel
Intent to guard St. Robert's cell;
As if with memory of the affray
Far distant, when, as legends say,
The Monks of Fountain's thronged to force
From its dear home the Hermit's corse.
That in their keeping it might lie,
To crown their abbey's sanctity.
So had they rushed into the grot
Of sense despised, a world forgot,
And torn him from his loved retreat,
Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat
Still hint that quiet best is found,
Even by the *Living*, under ground;
But a bold Knight, the selfish aim
Defeating, put the Monks to shame,
There where you see his Image stand
Bare to the sky, with threatening brand,

* On the banks of the river Nid, near Knaresborough.

Which lingering NID is proud to show
Reflected in the pool below.

Thus, like the men of earliest days,
Our sires set forth their grateful praise:
Uncouth the workmanship, and rude!
But, nursed in mountain solitude,
Might some aspiring artist dare
To seize whate'er, through misty air,
A ghost, by glimpses, may present
Of imitable lineament,
And give the phantom an array
That less should scorn the abandoned clay;
Then let him hew with patient stroke
An Ossian out of mural rock,
And leave the figurative Man —
Upon thy margin, roaring Bran! —
Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,
An everlasting watch to keep;
With local sanctities in trust,
More precious than a hermit's dust;
And virtues through the mass infused,
Which old idolatry abused.

What though the Granite would deny
All fervor to the sightless eye;
And touch from rising suns in vain
Solicit a Memnonian strain;
Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,
The wind might force the deep-grooved harp
To utter melancholy moans,

Not unconnected with the tones
Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones;
While grove and river notes would lend,
Less deeply sad, with these to blend!

Vain pleasures of luxurious life,
For ever with yourselves at strife;
Through town and country both deranged
By affectations interchanged,
And all the perishable gauds
That heaven-deserted man applauds;
When will your hapless patrons learn
To watch and ponder, — to discern
The freshness, the everlasting youth,
Of admiration sprung from truth;
From beauty infinitely growing
Upon a mind with love o'erflowing,
To sound the depths of every Art
That seeks its wisdom through the heart?

Thus (where the intrusive Pile, ill-graced
With bawbles of theatric taste,
O'erlooks the torrent breathing showers
On motley bands of alien flowers
In stiff confusion set or sown,
Till Nature cannot find her own,
Or keep a remnant of the sod
Which Caledonian Heroes trod)
I mused; and, thirsting for redress,
Recoiled into the wilderness.

IV.

YARROW VISITED.

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

(See page 29.)

And is this — Yarrow? — *This* the Stream
Of which my fancy cherished,
So faithfully, a waking dream?
An image that hath perished!
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why? — a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender, hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes

All profitless dejection;
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding:
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The Water-wraith ascended thrice,
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
The haunts of happy Lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And Pity sanctifies the Verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary!
The shattered front of Newark's Towers
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in;
For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in!
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there, —
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I inwreathed my own!
'T were no offence to reason;
The sober Hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see, — but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of fancy still survives, —

Her sunshine plays upon thee!
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the Heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine, —
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me, — to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

POEMS

DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY.

PART I.

I.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

FAIR Star of evening, Splendor of the west,
Star of my Country! — on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Shouldst be my Country's emblem; and shouldst wink.
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory! — I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heart-felt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

II.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Is it a reed that 's shaken by the wind,
Or what is it that ye go forth to see?
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and blind,
Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
In France, before the new-born Majesty.
'T is ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
A seemly reverence may be paid to power;
But that 's a loyal virtue, never sown
In haste, nor springing with a transient shower:
When truth, when sense, when liberty, were flown,
What hardship had it been to wait an hour?
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone!

III.

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARDRES, AUGUST 7, 1802.

JONES! as from Calais southward you and I
Went pacing side by side, this public Way
Streamed with the pomp of a too credulous day,*
When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty:

* 14th July, 1790.

A homeless sound of joy was in the sky:
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth,
Beat like the heart of Man: songs, garlands, mirth,
Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh!
And now, sole register that these things were,
Two solitary greetings have I heard,
"*Good morrow, Citizen!*" a hollow word,
As if a dead man spake it! Yet despair
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
Whose vernal coverts Winter hath laid bare.*

IV.

1801.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest mood
Of that Man's mind, — what can it be? what food
Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could *he* gain?
'T is not in battles that from youth we train
The Governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
Wisdom doth live with children round her knees:
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
Of the mind's business: these are the degrees
By which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
True Power doth grow on; and her rights are these

* See Note.

V.

CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names:
This is young Buonaparté's natal day,
And his is henceforth an established sway, —
Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
Her approbation, and with pomps and games.
Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay!
Calais is not: and I have bent my way
To the sea-coast, noting that each man frames
His business as he likes. Far other show
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder time;
The senselessness of joy was then sublime!
Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,
Consul, or King, can sound himself to know
The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

VI.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West: the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a Mate,

She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

VII.

THE KING OF SWEDEN.

The Voice of Song from distant lands shall call
To that great King; shall hail the crownèd Youth
Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,
By one example hath set forth to all
How they with dignity may stand; or fall,
If fall they must. Now, whither doth it tend?
And what to him and his shall be the end?
That thought is one which neither can appall
Nor cheer him; for the illustrious Swede hath done
The thing which ought to be; is raised *above*
All consequences: work he hath begun
Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
Which all his glorious ancestors approve:
The heroes bless him, him their rightful son.*

* See note.

VIII.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den; —
O miserable Chieftain! where and when
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do thou
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and skies;
There 's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

IX.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1802

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced those times was the chasing of all Negroes from France by decree of the government: we had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled.

We had a female Passenger who came
From Calais with us, spotless in array, —
A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,

Yet downcast, as a woman fearing blame;
Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim
She sat, from notice turning not away,
But on all proffered intercourse did lay
A weight of languid speech, or to the same
No sign of answer made by word or face:
Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,
That, burning independent of the mind,
Joined with the lustre of her rich attire
To mock the Outcast. — O ye Heavens, be kind!
And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race!

X.

COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF LANDING.

Here, on our native soil, we breathe once more.
The cock that crows, the smoke that curls, that sound
Of bells; — those boys who in yon meadow-ground
In white-sleeved shirts are playing; and the roar
Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore; —
All, all are English. Oft have I looked round
With joy in Kent's green vales; but never found
Myself so satisfied in heart before.
Europe is yet in bonds; but let that pass,
Thought for another moment. Thou art free,
My Country! and 't is joy enough and pride
For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
Of England once again, and hear and see,
With such a dear Companion at my side.

XI.

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR DOVER.

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;
And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
The coast of France, — the coast of France how near!
Drawn almost into frightful neighborhood.
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters; yet what power is there!
What mightiness for evil and for good!
Even so doth God protect us, if we be
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

XII.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee

Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee!

XIII.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

XIV.

LONDON, 1802.

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
O, raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power!
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XV.

GREAT men have been among us; hands that penned
And tongues that uttered wisdom, — better none:
The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
These moralists could act and comprehend:
They knew how genuine glory was put on;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendor: what strength was, that would not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 't is strange.
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!
No single volume paramount, no code,
No master spirit, no determined road;
But equally a want of books and men!

XVI.

It is not to be thought of, that the Flood
Of British freedom, which to the open sea
Of the world's praise from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands, —
That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armory of the invincible Knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. — In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

XVII.

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart

When men change swords for legers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country! — am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

XVIII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

One might believe that natural miseries
Had blasted France, and made of it a land
Unfit for men; and that in one great band
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at ease.
But 't is a chosen soil, where sun and breeze
Shed gentle favors: rural works are there,
And ordinary business without care;
Spot rich in all things that can soothe and please!
How piteous then that there should be such dearth
Of knowledge; that whole myriads should unite
To work against themselves such fell despite. —
Should come in frenzy and in drunken mirth,
Impatient to put out the only light
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth!

XIX.

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear,
Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor, and wall,
Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall:
'T is his who walks about in the open air,
One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear
Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,
Who, even the best, in such condition, free
From self-reproach, reproach that he must share
With Human-nature? Never be it ours
To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
And know that noble feelings, manly powers,
Instead of gathering strength, must droop and pine;
And earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
Fade, and participate in man's decline.

XX.

OCTOBER, 1803.

THESE times strike moneyed worldlings with dismay:
Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
With words of apprehension and despair:
While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
Men unto whom sufficient for the day
And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
Sound, healthy children of the God of heaven,

And cheerful as the rising sun in May.
What do we gather hence but firmer faith
That every gift of noble origin
Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath;
That virtue and the faculties within
Are vital, — and that riches are akin
To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death?

XXI.

England! the time is come when thou shouldst wean
Thy heart from its emasculating food;
The truth should now be better understood;
Old things have been unsettled; we have seen
Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
But for thy trespasses; and, at this day,
If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
Aught good were destined, thou wouldst step between.
England! all nations in this charge agree:
But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
Far, far more abject, is thine Enemy:
Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
Of thy offences be a heavy weight:
O grief, that Earth's best hopes rest all with thee!

XXII.

OCTOBER, 1803.

When, looking on the present face of things
I see one man — of men the meanest, too! —
Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,
With mighty Nations for his underlings,
The great events with which old story rings
Seem vain and hollow; I find nothing great:
Nothing is left which I can venerate;
So that a doubt almost within me springs
Of Providence, such emptiness at length
Seems at the heart of all things. But, great God!
I measure back the steps which I have trod;
And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the strength
Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts sublime
I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

XXIII.

TO THE MEN OF KENT. OCTOBER, 1803.

Vanguard of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
Now is the time to prove your hardiment!
To France be words of invitation sent!
They from their fields can see the countenance
Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,

And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath;
Confirmed the charters that were yours before; —
No parleying now! In Britain is one breath;
We all are with you now from shore to shore: —
Ye men of Kent, 't is victory or death!

XXIV.

What if our numbers barely could defy
The arithmetic of babes, must foreign hordes,
Slaves vile as ever were befooled by words,
Striking through English breasts the anarchy
Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie
Our hands behind our backs with felon cords?
Yields everything to discipline of swords?
Is man as good as man, none low, none high? —
Nor discipline nor valor can withstand
The shock, nor quell the inevitable rout,
When in some great extremity breaks out
A people, on their own beloved Land
Risen, like one man, to combat in the sight
Of a just God for liberty and right.

XXV.

LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION.

1803.

Come ye, who, if (which Heaven avert!) the Land
Were with herself at strife, would take your stand,
Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's side,
And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your pride; —
Come ye, who, not less zealous, might display
Banners at enmity with regal sway,
And, like the Pyms and Miltons of that day,
Think that a State would live in sounder health
If Kingship bowed its head to Commonwealth; —
Ye too, whom no discreditable fear
Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless tear,
Uncertain what to choose and how to steer; —
And ye, who might mistake for sober sense
And wise reserve the plea of indolence; —
Come ye, — whate'er your creed, — O waken all
Whate'er your temper, at your Country's call;
Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
Or save this honored Land from every Lord
But British reason and the British sword.

XXVI.

ANTICIPATION. OCTOBER, 1803.

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won!
On British ground the invaders are laid low;
The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
And left them lying in the silent sun,
Never to rise again! — the work is done.
Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful show,
And greet your sons! drums beat and trumpets blow!
Make merry, wives! ye little children, stun
Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise!
Clap, infants, clap your hands! Divine must be
That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,
And even the prospect of our brethren slain,
Hath something in it which the heart enjoys: —
In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

XXVII.

NOVEMBER, 1806.

ANOTHER year! — another deadly blow!
Another mighty Empire overthrown!
And we are left, or shall be left, alone;
The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
'T is well! from this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;

That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honor which they do not understand.

XXVIII.

ODE.

I.

Who rises on the banks of Seine,
And binds her temples with the civic wreath?
What joy to read the promise of her mien!
How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings beneath
But they are ever playing,
And twinkling in the light,
And, if a breeze be straying,
That breeze she will invite;
And stands on tiptoe, conscious she is fair,
And calls a look of love into her face,
And spreads her arms, as if the general air
Alone could satisfy her wide embrace.
— Melt, Principalities, before her melt!
Her love ye hailed, — her wrath have felt!
But she through many a change of form hath gone

And stands amidst you now an armèd creature,
Whose panoply is not a thing put on,
But the live scales of a portentous nature;
That, having forced its way from birth to birth,
Stalks round, abhorred by Heaven, a terror to the
Earth!

II.

I marked the breathings of her dragon crest;
My Soul, a sorrowful interpreter,
In many a midnight vision bowed
Before the ominous aspect of her spear;
Whether the mighty beam, in scorn upheld,
Threatened her foes, — or, pompously at rest,
Seemed to bisect her orbèd shield,
As stretches a blue bar of solid cloud
Across the setting sun and all the fiery west.

III.

So did she daunt the Earth, and God defy!
And, wheresoe'er she spread her sovereignty,
Pollution tainted all that was most pure.
— Have we not known, — and live we not to tell, —
That Justice seemed to hear her final knell?
Faith buried deeper in her own deep breast
Her stores, and sighed to find them insecure!
And Hope was maddened by the drops that fell
From shades, her chosen place of short-lived rest.
Shame followed shame, and woe supplanted woe, —
Is this the only change that time can show?

How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye patient
Heavens, how long?
— Infirm ejaculation! from the tongue
Of Nations wanting virtue to be strong
Up to the measure of accorded might,
And daring not to feel the majesty of right!

IV.

Weak Spirits are there, — who would ask,
Upon the pressure of a painful thing,
The lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing;
Or let their wishes loose, in forest glade,
Among the lurking powers
Of herbs and lowly flowers,
Or seek, from saints above, miraculous aid, —
That Man may be accomplished for a task
Which his own nature hath enjoined; — and why?
If, when that interference hath relieved him,
He must sink down to languish
In worse than former helplessness, — and lie
Till the caves roar, — and, imbecility
Again engendering anguish,
The same weak wish returns, that had before deceived him.

V.

But Thou, supreme Disposer! mayst not speed
The course of things, and change the creed
Which hath been held aloft before men's sight
Since the first framing of societies,

Whether, as bards have told in ancient song,
Built up by soft seducing harmonies;
Or prest together by the appetite,
And by the power, of wrong.

PART II.

I.

ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian ground,
And to the people at the Isthmian Games
Assembled he, by a herald's voice, proclaims
THE LIBERTY OF GREECE:—the words rebound
Until all voices in one voice are drowned;
Glad acclamation by which air was rent!
And birds, high flying in the element,
Dropped to the earth, astonished at the sound!
Yet were the thoughtful grieved; and still that voice
Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy's ear:
Ah! that a *Conqueror's* words should be so dear:
Ah! that a *boon* could shed such rapturous joys!
A gift of that which is not to be given
By all the blended powers of Earth and Heaven.

II.

UPON THE SAME EVENT.

When, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn
The tidings passed of servitude repealed,
And of that joy which shook the Isthmian Field,
The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter scorn.
"'T is known," cried they, "that he, who would adorn
His envied temples with the Isthmian crown,
Must either win, through effort of his own,
The prize, or be content to see it worn
By more deserving brows. — Yet so ye prop,
Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,
Your feeble spirits! Greece her head hath bowed
As if the wreath of liberty thereon
Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,
Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's top."

III.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE.

MARCH, 1807.

Clarkson! it was an obstinate hill to climb:
How toilsome — nay, how dire — it was, by thee
Is known; by none, perhaps, so feelingly:
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,

Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
First roused thee. — O true yoke-fellow of Time,
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn!
The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn;
And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
A great man's happiness; thy zeal shall find
Repose at length, firm friend of human kind!

IV.

A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY, 1807.

High deeds, O Germans, are to come from you!
Thus in your books the record shall be found:
'A watchword was pronounced, a potent sound, —
Arminius! — all the people quaked like dew
Stirred by the breeze; they rose, a Nation, true,
True to herself, — the mighty Germany,
She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,
She rose, and off at once the yoke she threw.
All power was given her in the dreadful trance;
Those new-born Kings she withered like a flame."
— Woe to them all! but heaviest woe and shame
To that Bavarian who could first advance
His banner in accursed league with France,
First open traitor to the German name!

V.

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE LAKE. 1807.

Clouds, lingering yet, extend in solid bars
Through the gray west; and lo! these waters steeled
By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield
A vivid repetition of the stars;
Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars,
Amid his fellows beauteously revealed
At happy distance from Earth's groaning field,
Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.
Is it a mirror? — or the nether Sphere
Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds
Her own calm fires? — But list! a voice is near
Great Pan himself low whispering through the reeds,
"Be thankful, thou; for, if unholy deeds
Ravage the world, tranquillity is here!"

VI.

Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes
The genuine mien and character would trace
Of the rash Spirit that still holds her place,
Prompting the world's audacious vanities!
Go back, and see the Tower of Babel rise;
The pyramid extend its monstrous base,

For some Aspirant of our short-lived race,
Anxious an aery name to immortalize.
There, too, ere wiles and politic dispute
Gave specious coloring to aim and act,
See the first mighty Hunter leave the brute,
To chase mankind, with men in armies packed
For his field-pastime high and absolute,
While, to dislodge his game, cities are sacked!

VII.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING A TRACT, OCCASIONED BY THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA.

1808.

Not 'mid the World's vain objects, that enslave
The free-born Soul, — that World whose vaunted skill
In selfish interest perverts the will,
Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave, —
Not there; but in dark wood and rocky cave,
And hollow vale, which foaming torrents fill
With omnipresent murmur as they rave
Down their steep beds, that never shall be still:
Here, mighty Nature! in this school sublime
I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain;
For her consult the auguries of time,
And through the human heart explore my way;
And look and listen, — gathering, whence I may,
Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

VIII.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME AND ON THE SAME OCCASION.

I DROPPED my pen; and listened to the Wind
That sang of trees uptorn and vessels tost, —
A midnight harmony; and wholly lost
To the general sense of men by chains confined
Of business, care, or pleasure; or resigned
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impassioned strain,
Which, without aid or numbers, I sustain,
Like acceptation from the World will find.
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows past;
And to the attendant promise will give heed, —
The prophecy, — like that of this wild blast,
Which, while it makes the heart with sadness shrink,
Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed.

IX.

HOFFER.

OF mortal parents is the Hero born
By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led?
Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead
Returned to animate an age forlorn?
He comes like Phœbus through the gates of morn
When dreary darkness is discomfited,

Yet mark his modest state! upon his head,
That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.
O Liberty! they stagger at the shock
From van to rear,—and with one mind would flee,
But half their host is buried:—rock on rock
Descends:—beneath this godlike Warrior, see!
Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock
The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

X.

Advance, come forth from thy Tyrolean ground,
Dear Liberty! stern Nymph of soul untamed;
Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains named!
Through the long chain of Alps from mound to
mound
And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo, bound;
Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn
Have roused her from her sleep: and forest-lawn,
Cliffs, woods, and caves, her viewless steps resound,
And babble of her pastime!—On, dread Power!
With such invisible motion speed thy flight,
Through hanging clouds, from craggy height to
height,
Through the green vales and through the herds-
man's bower,
That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,
Here, there and in all places at one hour

XI.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE.

The Land we from our fathers had in trust,
And to our children will transmit, or die:
This is our maxim, this our piety;
And God and Nature say that it is just.
That which we *would* perform in arms, — we must
We read the dictate in the infant's eye;
In the wife's smile; and in the placid sky;
And, at our feet, amid the silent dust
Of them that were before us. — Sing aloud
Old songs, the precious music of the heart!
Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the wind!
While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to assert
Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

XII.

Alas! what boots the long, laborious quest
Of moral prudence, sought through good and ill;
Or pains abstruse, to elevate the will,
And lead us on to that transcendent rest
Where every passion shall the sway attest
Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill;
What is it but a vain and curious skill,
If sapient Germany must lie deprest

Beneath the brutal sword? — Her haughty Schools
Shall blush; and may not we with sorrow say,
A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,
Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought
More for mankind at this unhappy day
Than all the pride of intellect and thought?

XIII.

And is it among rude, untutored Dales,
There, and there only, that the heart is true?
And, rising to repel or to subdue,
Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails?
Ah no! though Nature's dread protection fails,
There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew
Iberian Burghers when the sword they drew
In Zaragoza, naked to the gales
Of fiercely breathing war. The truth was felt
By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,
Like him of noble birth and noble mind;
By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear;
And wanderers of the street, to whom is dealt
The bread which without industry they find.

XIV.

O'er the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,
Dwells in the affections and the soul of man

A Godhead, like the universal PAN;
But more exalted, with a brighter train:
And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,
Showered equally on city and on field,
And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield
In these usurping times of fear and pain?
Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it Heaven!
We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws
To which the triumph of all good is given,
High sacrifice, and labor without pause,
Even to the death: — else wherefore should the eye
Of man converse with immortality?

XV.

ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE.

IT was a *moral* end for which they fought;
Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to shame,
Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved an aim,
A resolution, or enlivening thought?
Nor hath that moral good been *vainly* sought;
For in their magnanimity and fame
Powers have they left, an impulse, and a claim
Which neither can be overturned nor bought.
Sleep, Warriors, sleep! among your hills repose!
We know that ye, beneath the stern control
Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished soul:
And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,
Europe breaks forth; then, Shepherds! shall ye rise
For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

XVI.

HAIL, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye
We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,
Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
These desolate remains are trophies high
Of more than martial courage in the breast
Of peaceful civic virtue: they attest
Thy matchless worth to all posterity.
Blood flowed before thy sight without remorse;
Disease consumed thy vitals; War upheaved
The ground beneath thee with volcanic force:
Dread trials! yet encountered and sustained
Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,
And law was from necessity received.

XVII.

SAY, what is Honor? — 'T is the finest sense
Of *justice* which the human mind can frame,
Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
And guard the way of life from all offence
Suffered or done. When lawless violence
Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the scale
Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,
Honor is hopeful elevation, — whence
Glory and triumph. Yet with politic skill
Endangered States may yield to terms unjust;

Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the dust, —
A Foe's most favorite purpose to fulfil:
Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust
Are forfeited; but infamy doth kill.

XVIII.

THE martial courage of a day is vain,
An empty noise of death the battle's roar,
If vital hope be wanting to restore,
Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a strain
Of triumph, how the laboring Danube bore
A weight of hostile corses: drenched with gore
Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped with slain
Yet see, (the mighty tumult overpast,)
Austria a Daughter of her Throne hath sold!
And her Tyrolean Champion we behold
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck cast,
Murdered without relief. Oh! blind as bold,
To think that such assurance can stand fast!

XIX.

BRAVE Schill! by death delivered, take thy flight
From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest
With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,
Or in the fields of empyrean light.
A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night:

Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and sublime,
Stand in the spacious firmament of time,
Fixed as a star: such glory is thy right.
Alas! it may not be: for earthly fame
Is Fortune's frail dependant; yet there lives
A Judge, who, as man claims by merit, gives;
To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed;
In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

XX.

Call not the royal Swede unfortunate,
Who never did to Fortune bend the knee;
Who slighted fear; rejected steadfastly
Temptation; and whose kingly name and state
Have "perished by his choice, and not his fate"
Hence lives he, to his inner self endeared;
And hence, wherever virtue is revered,
He sits a more exalted Potentate,
Throned in the hearts of men. Should Heaven ordain
That this great servant of a righteous cause
Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to endure,
Yet may a sympathizing spirit pause,
Admonished by these truths, and quench all pain
In thankful joy and gratulation pure.*

* See note to Sonnet VII., page 68.

XXI.

Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid
His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel slight
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made
By the blind Goddess, — ruthless, undismayed;
And so hath gained at length a prosperous height
Round which the elements of worldly might
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless force!
Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,
Internal darkness and unquiet breath;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
Him from that height shall Heaven precipitate
By violent and ignominious death.

XXII.

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,
Forced to descend into his destined tomb, —
A dungeon dark! where he must waste the year,
And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear,
What time his injured country is a stage
Whereon deliberate Valor and the rage
Of righteous Vengeance side by side appear,
Filling from morn to night the heroic scene

With deeds of hope and everlasting praise; —
Say, can he think of this with mind serene
And silent fetters? Yes, if visions bright
Shine on his soul, reflected from the days
When he himself was tried in open light.

XXIII.

1810.

Ah! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor pen
Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave!
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the wave?
Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken
Of pitying human-nature? Once again
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Champion brave
Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,
And through all Europe cheer desponding men
With new-born hope. Unbounded is the might
Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.
Hark, how thy Country triumphs! — Smilingly
The Eternal looks upon her sword that gleams,
Like his own lightning, over mountains high,
On rampart, and the banks of all her streams.

XXIV

An due observance of an ancient rite,
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie

Dead in the sinless time of infancy,
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments white;
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph bright,
They bind the unoffending creature's brows
With happy garlands of the pure white rose:
Then do a festal company unite
In choral song; and, while the uplifted cross
Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne
Uncovered to his grave: 't is closed, — her loss
The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs must mourn
But soon, through Christian faith, is grief subdued
And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

XXV.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN AT ONE OF THOSE FUNERALS.

1810.

Yet, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our Foes
With firmer soul, yet labor to regain
Our ancient freedom; else 't were worse than vain
To gather round the bier these festal shows.
A garland fashioned of the pure white rose
Becomes not one whose father is a slave:
O, bear the infant covered to his grave!
These venerable mountains now inclose
A people sunk in apathy and fear.
If this endure, farewell, for us, all good!
The awful light of heavenly innocence

Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier;
And guilt and shame, from which is no defence,
Descend on all that issues from our blood.

XXVI.

THE OAK OF GUERNICA.

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following

SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME. 1810.

Oak of Guernica! Tree of holier power
Than that which in Dodona did enshrine
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine,
Heard from the depths of its aërial bower,
How canst thou flourish at this blighting hour?
What hope, what joy, can sunshine bring to thee,
Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,
The dews of morn, or April's tender shower?
Stroke merciful and welcome would that be
Which should extend thy branches on the ground,
If never more within their shady round
Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,
Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,
Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

XXVII.

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD.

1810.

We can endure that he should waste our lands,
Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame
Return us to the dust from which we came;
Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands:
And we can brook the thought that by his hands
Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,
For his delight, a solemn wilderness
Where all the brave lie dead. But when of bands
Which he will break for us he dares to speak,
Of benefits, and of a future day
When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway;
Then, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak
Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks, declare
That he has power to inflict what we lack strength
to bear.

XXVIII.

Avaunt all specious pliancy of mind
In men of low degree, all smooth pretence!
I better like a blunt indifference,
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined
To win me at first sight: and be there joined
Patience and temperance with this high reserve

Honor that knows the path and will not swerve,
Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind,
And piety towards God. Such men of old
Were England's native growth; and, throughout Spain,
(Thanks to high God!) forests of such remain:
Then for that Country let our hopes be bold;
For matched with these shall Policy prove vain,
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold.

XXIX.

1810.

O'erweening Statesmen have full long relied
On fleets and armies, and external wealth:
But from *within* proceeds a Nation's health;
Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with pride
To the paternal floor; or turn aside,
In the thronged city, from the walks of gain,
As being all unworthy to detain
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.
There are who cannot languish in this strife
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good
Of such high course was felt and understood;
Who to their Country's cause have bound a life
Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given
To labor and to prayer, to nature and to heaven.*

* See Laborde's character of the Spanish people; from him the sentiment of these last two lines is taken.

XXX.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH GUERILLAS.

Hunger, and sultry heat, and nipping blast
From bleak hill-top, and length of march by night
Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height, —
These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers past,
The roving Spanish Bands are reached at last,
Charged, and dispersed like foam: but as a flight
Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,
So these, — and, heard of once again, are chased
With combinations of long-practised art
And newly-kindled hope; but they are fled, —
Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead:
Where now? — Their sword is at the Foeman's
heart!
And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,
And hang like dreams around his guilty bed.

XXXI.

SPANISH GUERILLAS.

1811.

They seek, are sought; to daily battle led,
Shrink not, though far outnumbered by their Foes
For they have learnt to open and to close
The ridges of grim war; and at their head
Are captains such as erst their country bred

Or fostered, self-supported chiefs, — like those
Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose;
Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian fled.
In one who lived unknown a shepherd's life
Redoubted Viriatus breathes again;
And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,
With that great Leader* vies, who, sick of strife
And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid
In some green island of the western main.

XXXII.

1811.

The power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave people into light can bring
Or hide, at will, — for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power, that spirit, whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves. — From year to year
Springs this indigenous produce far and near;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

* Sertorius.

XXXIII.

1811.

HERE pause: the poet claims at least this praise,
That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope
Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
In the worst moment of these evil days;
From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,
For its own honor, on man's suffering heart.
Never may from our souls one truth depart, —
That an accursed thing it is to gaze
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye;
Nor — touched with due abhorrence of *their* guilt
For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
And justice labors in extremity —
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!

XXXIV.

THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA.

1812 - 13.

HUMANITY, delighting to behold
A fond reflection of her own decay,
Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,
Propped on a staff, and, through the sullen day,

In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,
As though his weakness were disturbed by pain:
Or, if a juster fancy should allow
An undisputed symbol of command,
The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,
Infirmly grasped within a palsied hand.
These emblems suit the helpless and forlorn;
But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.

For he it was, dread Winter! who beset,
Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,
That host, when from the regions of the Pole
They shrunk, insane ambition's barren goal, —
That host, as huge and strong as e'er defied
Their God, and placed their trust in human pride
As fathers persecute rebellious sons,
He smote the blossoms of their warrior youth;
He called on Frost's inexorable tooth
Life to consume in Manhood's firmest hold;
Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly runs;
For why, — unless for liberty enrolled
And sacred home, — ah! why should hoary Age
be bold?
Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,
But fleeter far the pinions of the Wind,
Which from Siberian caves the Monarch freed,
And sent him forth, with squadrons of his kind,
And bade the Snow their ample backs bestride,
And to the battle ride.
No pitying voice commands a halt

No courage can repel the dire assault;
Distracted, spiritless, benumbed, and blind,
Whole legions sink, — and, in one instant, find
Burial and death: look for them, — and descry,
When morn returns, beneath the clear, blue sky,
A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy!

XXXV.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Ye Storms, resound the praises of your King!
And ye, mild Seasons, — in a sunny clime,
Midway on some high hill, while Father Time
Looks on delighted, — meet in festal ring,
And loud and long of Winter's triumph sing!
Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and fruit, and flowers,
Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety showers
And the dire flapping of his hoary wing!
Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green grass;
With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report your gain
Whisper it to the billows of the main,
And to the aërial zephyrs as they pass,
That old decrepit Winter, — *He* hath slain
That Host, which rendered all your bounties vain

XXXVI.

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze
Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood
Lavished in fight with desperate hardihood;
The unfeeling Elements no claim shall raise
To rob our Human-nature of just praise
For what she did and suffered. Pledges sure
Of a deliverance absolute and pure
She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten ways
Of Providence. But now did the Most High
Exalt his still, small voice, — to quell that Host
Gathered his power, a manifest ally;
He, whose heaped waves confounded the proud boast
Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and Frost,
"Finish the strife by deadliest victory!"

XXXVII.

THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF HOCKHEIM.

Abruptly paused the strife; — the field throughout,
Resting upon his arms, each warrior stood,
Checked in the very act and deed of blood,
With breath suspended, like a listening scout.
O Silence! thou wert mother of a shout
That through the texture of yon azure dome
Cleaves its glad way, a cry of harvest-home
Uttered to Heaven in ecstasy devout!

The barrier Rhine hath flashed, through battle-smoke,
On men who gaze heart-smitten by the view,
As if all Germany had felt the shock!
— Fly, wretched Gauls! ere they the charge renew
Who have seen — themselves now casting off the yoke —
The unconquerable Stream his course pursue.

XXXVIII.

NOVEMBER, 1813.

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright,
Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and flow
Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,
Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,
And lamentably wrapped in twofold night,
Whom no weak hopes deceived; whose mind ensued
Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,
Peace that should claim respect from lawless Might.
Dread King of kings, vouchsafe a ray divine
To his forlorn condition! let thy grace
Upon his inner soul in mercy shine;
Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace
(Though it were only for a moment's space)
The triumphs of this hour; for they are THINE

XXXIX.

ODE.

1814.

Carmina possumus
Donare, et pretium dicere muneri.
Non incisa notis marmora publicis,
Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis
Post mortem ducibus . . . . .
. . . . . clarius indicant
Laudes, quam . . . . . Pierides; neque,
Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris,
Mercedem tuleris. — Hor. Car. 8, Lib. 4.

I.

When the soft hand of sleep had closed the latch
On the tired household of corporeal sense,
And Fancy, keeping unreluctant watch,
Was free her choicest favors to dispense;
I saw, in wondrous pérspective displayed,
A landscape more august than happiest skill
Of pencil ever clothed with light and shade:
An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,
City, and naval stream, suburban grove,
And stately forest where the wild deer rove;
Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky towns,
And scattered rural farms of aspect bright;
And, here and there, between the pastoral downs,
The azure sea upswelled upon the sight.
Fair prospect, such as Britain only shows!
But not a living creature could be seen

Through its wide circuit, that, in deep repose,
And even to sadness, lonely and serene,
Lay hushed; till — through a portal in the sky
Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a storm,
Opening before the sun's triumphant eye, —
Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form!
Earthward it glided with a swift descent;
Saint George himself this Visitant must be;
And, ere a thought could ask on what intent
He sought the regions of humanity,
A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified
City and field and flood; — aloud it cried: —

.

"Though from my celestial home,
Like a Champion, armed I come,
On my helm the dragon crest,
And the red cross on my breast,
I, the Guardian of this Land,
Speak not now of toilsome duty;
Well obeyed was that command, —
Whence bright days of festive beauty;
Haste, Virgins, haste! — the flowers which summer gave
Have perished in the field;
But the green thickets plenteously shall yield
Fit garlands for the brave,
That will be welcome, if by you entwined;
Haste, Virgins, haste! and you, ye Matrons grave
Go forth with rival usefulness of mind,
And gather what ye find

Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs,
To deck your stern Defenders' modest brows!
Such simple gifts prepare,
Though they have gained a worthier meed;
And in due time shall share
Those palms and amaranthine wreaths
Unto their martyred Countrymen decreed,
In realms where everlasting freshness breathes!"

II.

And lo! with crimson banners proudly streaming,
And upright weapons innocently gleaming,
Along the surface of a spacious plain
Advance in order the redoubted Bands,
And there receive green chaplets from the hands
Of a fair female train, —
Maids and Matrons, dight
In robes of dazzling white;
While from the crowd bursts forth a rapturous noise,
By the cloud-capt hills retorted;
And a throng of rosy boys
In loose fashion tell their joys;
And gray-haired sires, on staffs supported,
Look round, and by their smiling seem to say,
Thus strives a grateful Country to display
The mighty debt which nothing can repay.

III.

Anon before my sight a palace rose
Built of all precious substances, — so pure

And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows
Ability like splendor to endure:
Entered, with streaming thousands, through the gate,
I saw the banquet spread beneath a Dome of state.
A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate
The heaven of sable night
With starry lustre; yet had power to throw
Solemn effulgence, clear as solar light,
Upon a princely company below,
While the vault rang with choral harmony,
Like some Nymph-haunted grot beneath the roaring sea.
— No sooner ceased that peal, than on the verge
Of exultation hung a dirge
Breathed from a soft and lonely instrument,
That kindled recollections
Of agonized affections;
And, though some tears the strain attended,
The mournful passion ended
In peace of spirit, and sublime content!

IV.

But garlands wither; festal shows depart,
Like dreams themselves; and sweetest sound
(Albeit of effect profound)
It was, — and it is gone!
Victorious England! bid the silent Art
Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not fade,
Those high achievements; even as she arrayed

With second life the deed of Marathon
Upon Athenian walls;
So may she labor for thy civic halls:
And be the guardian spaces
Of consecrated places
As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient toil;
And let imperishable Columns rise,
Fixed in the depths of this courageous soil;
Expressive signals of a glorious strife,
And competent to shed a spark divine
Into the torpid breast of daily life; —
Records on which, for pleasure of all eyes,
The morning sun may shine
With gratulation thoroughly benign!

v.

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from Jove
And sage Mnemosyne, — full long debarred
From your first mansions, exiled all too long
From many a hallowed stream and grove,
Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,
Chanting for patient heroes the reward
Of never-dying song!
Now (for, though Truth descending from above
The Olympian summit hath destroyed for aye
Your kindred Deities, *ye* live and move,
Spared for obeisance from perpetual love
For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)
Now, on the margin of some spotless fountain,
Or top serene of unmolested mountain,

Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,
And for a moment meet the soul's desires!
That I, or some more favored Bard, may hear
What ye, celestial Maids! have often sung
Of Britain's acts, — may catch it with rapt ear,
And give the treasure to our British tongue!
So shall the characters of that proud page
Support their mighty theme from age to age;
And, in the desert places of the earth,
When they to future empires have given birth,
So shall the people gather and believe
The bold report, transferred to every clime;
And the whole world, not envious, but admiring,
And to the like aspiring,
Own, that the progeny of this fair Isle
Had power as lofty actions to achieve
As were performed in man's heroic prime;
Nor wanted, when their fortitude had held
Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,
A corresponding virtue to beguile
The hostile purpose of wide-wasting Time, —
That not in vain they labored to secure,
For their great deeds, perpetual memory,
And fame as largely spread as land and sea,
By Works of spirit high and passion pure!

XL.

FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYALIST, ON THE DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS OF THE DUC D'ENGHIEN.

DEAR Relics! from a pit of vilest mould
Uprisen, to lodge among ancestral kings,
And to inflict shame's salutary stings
On the remorseless hearts of men grown old
In a blind worship, — men perversely bold
Even to this hour, — yet some shall now forsake
Their monstrous Idol, if the dead e'er spake
To warn the living; if truth were ever told
By aught redeemed out of the hollow grave:
O murdered Prince! meek, loyal, pious, brave!
The power of retribution once was given:
But 't is a rueful thought, that willow bands
So often tie the thunder-wielding hands
Of Justice sent to earth from highest Heaven!

XLI.

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

(The last six lines intended for an inscription.)

FEBRUARY, 1816.

INTREPID sons of Albion! not by you
Is life despised; ah no! the spacious earth

Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of birth,
So many objects to which love is due:
Ye slight not life, — to God and Nature true;
But death, becoming death, is dearer far,
When duty bids you bleed in open war:
Hence hath your prowess quelled that impious crew
Heroes! — for instant sacrifice prepared,
Yet filled with ardor and on triumph bent
Mid direst shocks of mortal accident, —
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter spared
To guard the fallen, and consummate the event,
Your Country rears this sacred Monument!

XLII.

SIEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY JOHN SOBIESKI.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

O FOR a kindling touch from that pure flame
Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice
Of gratitude, beneath Italian skies,
In words like these: "Up, Voice of song! proclaim
Thy saintly rapture with celestial aim:
For lo! the Imperial City stands released
From bondage threatened by the embattled East,
And Christendom respires; from guilt and shame
Redeemed, from miserable fear set free,
By one day's feat, one mighty victory.
— Chant the Deliverer's praise in every tongue!
The cross shall spread, the crescent hath waxed dim

He conquering, as in joyful Heaven is sung,
HE CONQUERING THROUGH GOD AND GOD BY HIM." *

XLIII.

OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

THE Bard, — whose soul is meek as dawning day,
Yet trained to judgments righteously severe,
Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear,
As recognizing one Almighty sway:
He, — whose experienced eye can pierce the array
Of past events; to whom, in vision clear,
The aspiring heads of future things appear,
Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled away, —
Assoiled from all encumbrance of our time,†
He only, if such breathe, in strains devout
Shall comprehend this victory sublime;
Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,
The triumph hail, which from their peaceful clime
Angels might welcome with a choral shout!

XLIV.

EMPERORS and Kings, how oft have temples rung
With impious thanksgiving, the Almighty's scorn!

* See Filicaia's Ode.

† "From all this world's encumbrance did himself assoil."
Spenser.

How oft above their altars have been hung
Trophies that led the good and wise to mourn
Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,
And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung!
Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory, Peace is sprung;
In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.
Glory to arms! But, conscious that the nerve
Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed
Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear to swerve
Be just, be grateful; nor, the oppressor's creed
Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve
Than ever forced unpitied hearts to bleed.

XLV.

ODE.

1815.

I.

Imagination — ne'er before content,
But aye ascending, restless in her pride
From all that martial feats could yield
To her desires, or to her hopes present —
Stooped to the Victory, on that Belgic field,
Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,
And with the embrace was satisfied.

Fly, ministers of Fame,
With every help that ye from earth and heaven
may claim!
Bear through the world these tidings of delight!
— Hours, Days, and Months *have* borne them in
the sight
Of mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower
That landward stretches from the sea,
The morning's splendors to devour;
But this swift travel scorns the company
Of irksome change, or threats from saddening power.
— *The shock is given, the Adversaries bleed!*
Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!
Joyful annunciation! — it went forth, —
It pierced the caverns of the sluggish North, —
It found no barrier on the ridge
Of Andes, — frozen gulfs became its bridge, —
The vast Pacific gladdens with the freight, —
Upon the Lakes of Asia 't is bestowed, —
The Arabian desert shapes a willing road
Across her burning breast,
For this refreshing incense from the West! —
— Where snakes and lions breed,
Where towns and cities thick as stars appear,
Wherever fruits are gathered, and where'er
The upturned soil receives the hopeful seed,
While the Sun rules, and 'cross the shades of night,
The unwearied arrow hath pursued its flight!
The eyes of good men thankfully give heed,
And in its sparkling progress read

Of virtue crowned with glory's deathless meed:
Tyrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,
And slaves are pleased to learn that mighty feats
are done;
Even the proud Realm, from whose distracted
borders
This messenger of good was launched in air,
France, humbled France, amid her wild disorders
Feels, and hereafter shall the truth declare,
That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,
And utter England's name with sadly plausive voice.

II.

O genuine glory, pure renown!
And well might it beseem that mighty Town
Into whose bosom earth's best treasures flow,
To whom all persecuted men retreat,
If a new Temple lift her votive brow
High on the shore of silver Thames, to greet
The peaceful guest advancing from afar.
Bright be the Fabric, as a star
Fresh risen, and beautiful within! — there meet
Dependence infinite, proportion just;
A Pile that Grace approves, and Time can trust
With his most sacred wealth, heroic dust.

III.

But if the valiant of this land
In reverential modesty demand,
That all observance, due to them, be paid
Where their serene progenitors are laid;

Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-like sages,
England's illustrious sons of long, long ages;
Be it not unordained that solemn rites,
Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,
Shall be performed at pregnant intervals;
Commemoration holy that unites
The living generations with the dead;
By the deep, soul-moving sense
Of religious eloquence, —
By visual pomp, and by the tie
Of sweet and threatening harmony;
Soft notes, awful as the omen
Of destructive tempests coming,
And escaping from that sadness
Into elevated gladness;
While the white-robed choir attendant,
Under mouldering banners pendant,
Provoke all potent symphonies to raise
Songs of victory and praise,
For them who bravely stood unhurt, or bled
With medicable wounds, or found their graves
Upon the battle-field, or under ocean's waves;
Or were conducted home in single state,
And long procession, — there to lie,
Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,
Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate!

IV.

Nor will the God of peace and love
Such martial service disapprove.

He guides the Pestilence, the cloud
Of locusts travels on his breath;
The region that in hope was ploughed
His drought consumes, his mildew taints with death
He springs the hushed Volcano's mine,
He puts the Earthquake on her still design,
Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink,
And, drinking towns and cities, still can drink
Cities and towns;—'tis Thou,—the work is thine
The fierce Tornado sleeps within thy courts,—
He hears the word,— he flies,—
And navies perish in their ports:
For Thou art angry with thine enemies!
For these, and mourning for our errors,
And sins, that point their terrors,
We bow our heads before Thee, and we laud
And magnify thy name, Almighty God!
But Man is thy most awful instrument,
In working out a pure intent;
Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling mail,
And for thy righteous purpose they prevail;
Thine arm from peril guards the coasts
Of them who in thy laws delight;
Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful fight,
Tremendous God of battles, Lord of Hosts!

v.

Forbear:—to Thee,
Father and Judge of all, with fervent tongue
But in a gentler strain

Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong
(Too quick and keen) incited to disdain
Of pity pleading from the heart in vain, —
To THEE, — TO THEE,
Just God of Christianized Humanity,
Shall praises be poured forth, and thanks ascend,
That thou hast brought our warfare to an end,
And that we need no second victory!
Blest, above measure blest,
If on thy love our Land her hopes shall rest,
And all the Nations labor to fulfil
Thy law and live henceforth in peace, in pure
good-will.

XLVI.

ODE.

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING. JANUARY 18, 1816.

I

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night!
Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude
On hearts howe'er insensible or rude;
Whether thy punctual visitations smite
The haughty towers where monarchs dwell,
Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence bright,

Cheer'st the low threshold of the peasant's cell!
Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky
In naked splendor, clear from mist or haze,
Or cloud approaching to divert the rays,
Which even in deepest winter testify
Thy power and majesty,
Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.
— Well does thine aspect usher in this Day;
As aptly suits therewith that modest pace
Submitted to the chains
That bind thee to the path which God ordains
That thou shalt trace,
Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass away
Nor less the stillness of these frosty plains,
Their utter stillness, and the silent grace
Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,
(Whose tranquil pomp and spotless purity
Report of storms gone by
To us who tread below,)
Do with the service of this Day accord.
— Divinest Object which the uplifted eye
Of mortal man is suffered to behold;
Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights hast poured
Meek lustre, nor forget'st the humble Vale;
Thou who dost warm Earth's universal mould,
And for thy bounty wert not unadored
By pious men of old;
Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee hail!
Bright be thy course to-day, let not this promise
fail!

II.

Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,
All nature seems to hear me while I speak,
By feelings urged that do not vainly seek
Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes
That stream in blithe succession from the throats
Of birds, in leafy bower,
Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.
— There is a radiant though a short-lived flame,
That burns for Poets in the dawning east;
And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,
When the captivity of sleep had ceased;
But He who fixed immovably the frame
Of the round world, and built, by laws as strong,
A solid refuge for distress, —
The towers of righteousness, —
He knows that from a holier altar came
The quickening spark of this day's sacrifice;
Knows that the source is nobler whence doth rise
The current of this matin song;
That deeper far it lies
Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

III.

Have we not conquered? — by the vengeful sword?
Ah no! by dint of Magnanimity;
That curbed the baser passions, and left free
A loyal band to follow their liege Lord,
Clear-sighted Honor, and his staid Compeers,

Along a track of most unnatural years;
In execution of heroic deeds
Whose memory, spotless as the crystal beads
Of morning dew upon the untrodden meads,
Shall live enrolled above the starry spheres.
He who, in concert with an earthly string,
Of Britain's acts would sing,
He with enraptured voice will tell
Of one whose spirit no reverse could quell;
Of one that 'mid the failing never failed; —
Who paints how Britain struggled and prevailed
Shall represent her laboring with an eye
Of circumspect humanity;
Shall show her clothed with strength and skill
All martial duties to fulfil;
Firm as a rock in stationary fight;
In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam;
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting at midnight
To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream, —
Woe, woe to all that face her in the field!
Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

IV.

And thus is *missed* the sole true glory
That can belong to human story!
At which they only shall arrive
Who through the abyss of weakness dive.
The very humblest are too proud of heart;
And one brief day is rightly set apart
For Him who lifteth up and layeth low;

For that Almighty God to whom we owe,
Say not that we have vanquished, — but that we
survive.

v.

How dreadful the dominion of the impure!
Why should the Song be tardy to proclaim
That less than power unbounded could not tame
That soul of Evil, — which, from hell let loose,
Had filled the astonished world with such abuse
As boundless patience only could endure?
— Wide-wasted regions, — cities wrapt in flame, —
Who sees, may lift a streaming eye
To Heaven; — who never saw, may heave a sigh;
But the foundation of our nature shakes,
And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,
When desolated countries, towns on fire,
Are but the avowed attire
Of warfare waged with desperate mind
Against the life of virtue in mankind,
Assaulting without ruth
The citadels of truth;
While the fair gardens of civility,
By ignorance defaced,
By violence laid waste,
Perish without reprieve for flower or tree.

VI.

A crouching purpose, — a distracted will, —
Opposed to hopes that battened upon scorn,

And to desires whose ever-waxing horn
Not all the light of earthly power could fill;
Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient skill,
And to celerities of lawless force;
Which, spurning God, had flung away remorse, —
What could they gain but shadows of redress?
— So bad proceeded propagating worse;
And discipline was passion's dire excess.
Widens the fatal web, its lines extend,
And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend.
When will your trials teach you to be wise?
— O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies!

VII.

No more, — the guilt is banished,
And, with the guilt, the shame is fled;
And, with the guilt and shame, the Woe hath vanished,
Shaking the dust and ashes from her head!
— No more, — these lingerings of distress
Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.
What robe can Gratitude employ
So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?
What steps so suitable as those that move
In prompt obedience to spontaneous measures
Of glory, and felicity, and love,
Surrendering the whole heart to sacred pleasures?

VIII.

O Britain! dearer far than life is dear,
If one there be
Of all thy progeny
Who can forget thy prowess, never more
Be that ungrateful Son allowed to hear
Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents roar.
As springs the lion from his den,
As from a forest-brake
Upstarts a glistening snake,
The bold Arch-despot reappeared; — again
Wide Europe heaves, impatient to be cast,
With all her armèd Powers,
On that offensive soil, like waves upon a thousand shores.
The trumpet blew a universal blast!
But thou art foremost in the field: — there stand:
Receive the triumph destined to thy hand!
All States have glorified themselves; their claims
Are weighed by Providence, in balance even;
And now, in preference to the mightiest names,
To thee the exterminating sword is given.
Dread mark of approbation, justly gained!
Exalted office, worthily sustained!

IX.

Preserve, O Lord! within our hearts
The memory of thy favor,
That else insensibly departs,
And loses its sweet savor

Lodge it within us! — as the power of light
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright!
What offering, what transcendent monument
Shall our sincerity to Thee present?
— Not work of hands; but trophies that may reach
To highest Heaven, — the labor of the Soul;
That builds, as Thy unerring precepts teach,
Upon the internal conquests made by each,
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.
Yet will not heaven disown nor earth gainsay
The outward service of this day;
Whether the worshippers entreat
Forgiveness from God's mercy-seat;
Or thanks and praises to His throne ascend,
That He has brought our warfare to an end,
And that we need no second victory! ——
Ha! what a ghastly sight for man to see;
And to the heavenly saints in peace who dwell,
For a brief moment, terrible;
But, to Thy sovereign penetration, fair,
Before whom all things are, that were,
All judgments that have been, or e'er shall be;
Links in the chain of Thy tranquillity!
Along the bosom of this favored Nation,
Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undulation!
Let all who do this land inherit
Be conscious of Thy moving spirit!
O, 't is a goodly Ordinance, — the sight,

Though sprung from bleeding war, is one of pure
delight;
Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour arrive,
When a whole people shall kneel down in prayer
And, at one moment, in one rapture, strive
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude
For Thy protecting care,
Their solemn joy, praising the Eternal Lord
For tyranny subdued,
And for the sway of equity renewed,
For liberty confirmed, and peace restored!

x.

But hark the summons!—down the placid lake
Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower bells;
Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams would wake
The tender insects sleeping in their cells;
Bright shines the Sun,—and not a breeze to shake
The drops that tip the melting icicles.
O, enter now His temple gate!
Inviting words,—perchance already flung
(As the crowd press devoutly down the aisle
Of some old Minster's venerable pile)
From voices into zealous passion stung,
While the tubed engine feels the inspiring blast,
And has begun its clouds of sound to cast
Forth towards empyreal Heaven,
As if the fretted roof were riven.
Us, humbler ceremonies now await;
But in the bosom, with devout respect,

The banner of our joy we will erect,
And strength of love our souls shall elevate:
For to a few collected in his name,
Their Heavenly Father will incline an ear
Gracious to service hallowed by his aim; —
Awake! the majesty of God revere!
Go, and with foreheads meekly bowed
Present your prayers, — go, and rejoice aloud, —
The Holy One will hear!
And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith sincere,
Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,
Shall simply feel and purely meditate, —
Of warnings, from the unprecedented might,
Which, in our time, the impious have disclosed;
And of more arduous duties thence imposed
Upon the future advocates of right;
Of mysteries revealed,
And judgments unrepealed,
Of earthly revolution,
And final retribution, —
To his omniscience will appear
An offering not unworthy to find place,
On this high DAY of THANKS, before the Throne
of Grace!

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT.

1820.

DEDICATION.

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS, IN MS., TO ——.)

DEAR Fellow-travellers! think not that the Muse
To you presenting these memorial Lays,
Can hope the general eye thereon would gaze,
As on a mirror that gives back the hues
Of living Nature; no, — though free to choose
The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,
The fairest landscapes and the brightest days, —
Her skill she tried with less ambitious views.
For you she wrought: ye only can supply
The life, the truth, the beauty: she confides
In that enjoyment which with you abides,
Trusts to your love and vivid memory;
Thus far contented, that for you her verse
Shall lack not power the "meeting soul to pierce"!

RYDAL MOUNT, *November*, 1821.

W. WORDSWORTH.

I.

FISH-WOMEN. — ON LANDING AT CALAIS.

'T IS said, fantastic Ocean doth enfold
The likeness of whate'er on land is seen;

But, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,
Above whose heads the tide so long hath rolled,
The Dames resemble whom we here behold
How fearful were it down through opening waves
To sink, and meet them in their fretted caves,
Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,
And shrill and fierce in accent! — Fear it not:
For they Earth's fairest daughters do excel;
Pure undecaying beauty is their lot;
Their voices into liquid music swell,
Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry grot,
The undisturbed abodes where Sea-nymphs dwell

II.

BRUGES.

Bruges I saw attired with golden light
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe of power
The splendor fled; and now the sunless hour,
That, slowly making way for peaceful night,
Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my sight
Offers the beauty, the magnificence,
And sober graces, left her for defence
Against the injuries of time, the spite
Of fortune, and the desolating storms
Of future war. Advance not, — spare to hide,
O gentle Power of darkness! these mild hues;
Obscure not yet these silent avenues
Of stateliest architecture, where the Forms
Of nun-like females, with soft motion, glide!

III.

BRUGES.

THE Spirit of Antiquity — enshrined
In sumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet song,
In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,
And with devout solemnities entwined —
Mounts to the seat of grace within the mind
Hence Forms that glide with swan-like ease along,
Hence motions, even amid the vulgar throng,
To an harmonious decency confined:
As if the streets were consecrated ground,
The city one vast temple, dedicate
To mutual respect in thought and deed;
To leisure, to forbearances sedate;
To social cares from jarring passions freed;
A deeper peace than that in deserts found!

IV.

INCIDENT AT BRUGES.

IN Bruges town is many a street
Whence busy life hath fled;
Where, without hurry, noiseless feet
The grass-grown pavement tread.

There heard we, halting in the shade
Flung from a Convent-tower,
A harp that tuneful prelude made
To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell,
Was fit for some gay throng;
Though from the same grim turret fell
The shadow and the song.
When silent were both voice and chords,
The strain seemed doubly dear,
Yet sad as sweet, — for *English* words
Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve;
And pinnacle and spire
Quivered, and seemed almost to heave,
Clothed with innocuous fire;
But where we stood, the setting sun
Showed little of his state;
And, if the glory reached the Nun,
'T was through an iron grate.

Not always is the heart unwise,
Nor pity idly born,
If even a passing Stranger sighs
For them who do not mourn.
Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,
Captive, whoe'er thou be!
O, what is beauty, what is love
And opening life to thee?

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,
A feeling sanctified
By one soft trickling tear that stole
From the Maiden at my side;
Less tribute could she pay than this,
Borne gaily o'er the sea,
Fresh from the beauty and the bliss
Of English liberty?

V.

AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

A WINGÈD Goddess, clothed in vesture wrought
Of rainbow colors, — one whose port was bold,
Whose overburdened hand could scarcely hold
The glittering crowns and garlands which it brought, —
Hovered in air above the far-famed spot.
She vanished; leaving prospect blank and cold
Of wind-swept corn that wide around us rolled
In dreary billows, wood, and meagre cot,
And monuments that soon must disappear:
Yet a dread local recompense we found;
While glory seemed betrayed, while patriot zeal
Sank in our hearts, we felt as men *should* feel
With such vast hoards of hidden carnage near,
And horror breathing from the silent ground!

VI.

BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE.

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy choose?
Is this the stream whose cities, heights, and plains,
War's favorite playground, are with crimson stains
Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dews?
The Morn, that now, along the silver MEUSE,
Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the swains
To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,
Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit bestrews
The ripening corn beneath it. As mine eyes
Turn from the fortified and threatening hill,
How sweet the prospect of yon watery glade,
With its gray rocks clustering in pensive shade,
That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise
From the smooth meadow-ground, serene and still

VII.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

WAS it to disenchant, and to undo,
That we approached the Seat of Charlemaine?
To sweep from many an old romantic strain
That faith which no devotion may renew!
Why does this puny Church present to view
Her feeble columns? and that scanty chair!
This sword that one of our weak times might wear

Objects of false pretence, or meanly true!
If from a traveller's fortune I might claim
A palpable memorial of that day,
Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach
That ROLAND clove with huge two-handed sway,
And to the enormous labor left his name,
Where unremitting frosts the rocky crescent bleach.

VIII.

IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE.

O FOR the help of Angels to complete
This Temple, — Angels governed by a plan
Thus far pursued (how gloriously!) by Man,
Studious that *He* might not disdain the seat
Who dwells in heaven! But that aspiring heat
Hath failed; and now, ye Powers! whose gor-
geous wings
And splendid aspect yon emblazonings
But faintly picture, 't were an office meet
For you, on these unfinished shafts to try
The midnight virtues of your harmony: —
This vast design might tempt you to repeat
Strains that call forth upon empyreal ground
Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet!

IX.

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE.

Amid this dance of objects sadness steals
O'er the defrauded heart, — while sweeping by,
As in a fit of Thespian jollity,
Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green Earth reels
Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels
The venerable pageantry of Time,
Each beetling rampart, and each tower sublime,
And what the Dell unwillingly reveals
Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees espied
Near the bright River's edge. Yet why repine?
To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze, —
Such sweet wayfaring, — of life's spring the pride,
Her summer's faithful joy, — *that* still is mine,
And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.

X.

HYMN,

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH THE RAPIDS UNDER THE CASTLE OF HEIDELBERG.

Jesu! bless our slender Boat,
By the current swept along;

Loud its threatenings, — let them not
Drown the music of a song
Breathed thy mercy to implore,
Where these troubled waters roar!

Saviour, for our warning, seen
Bleeding on that precious Rood!
If, while through the meadows green
Gently wound the peaceful flood,
We forgot Thee, do not Thou
Disregard thy Suppliants now!

Hither, like yon ancient Tower
Watching o'er the River's bed,
Fling the shadow of thy power,
Else we sleep among the dead;
Thou who trod'st the billowy sea,
Shield us in our jeopardy!

Guide our Bark among the waves;
Through the rocks our passage smooth,
Where the whirlpool frets and raves,
Let thy love its anger soothe:
All our hope is placed in Thee:
Miserere Domine! *

* See Note

XI.

THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE.

Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly
Doth Danube spring to life*! The wandering
Stream
(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent's gleam
Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee
Slips from his prison walls: and Fancy, free
To follow in his track of silver light,
Mounts on rapt wing, and with a moment's flight
Hath reached the encincture of that gloomy sea
Whose waves the Orphean lyre forbade to meet
In conflict, whose rough winds forgot their jars
To waft the heroic progeny of Greece,
When the first Ship sailed for the Golden Fleece,—
Argo,—exalted for that daring feat
To fix in heaven her shape distinct with stars.

XII.

ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH, LAUTERBRUNNEN.

Uttered by whom, or how inspired, designed
For what strange service, does this concert reach
Our ears, and near the dwellings of mankind,—
'Mid fields familiarized to human speech?—

* See Note.

No Mermaids warble — to allay the wind
Driving some vessel toward a dangerous beach, —
More thrilling melodies; Witch answering Witch,
To chant a love-spell, never intertwined
Notes shrill and wild with art more musical:
Alas! that from the lips of abject Want
Or Idleness in tatters mendicant
The strain should flow, free Fancy to inthrall,
And with regret and useless pity haunt
This bold, this bright, this sky-born WATERFALL!*

XIII.

THE FALL OF THE AAR, HANDEC.

FROM the fierce aspect of this River, throwing
His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,
Back in astonishment and fear we shrink:
But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,
Flowers we espy beside the torrent growing;
Flowers that peep forth from many a cleft and chink,
And, from the whirlwind of his anger, drink
Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:
They suck — from breath that, threatening to destroy,
Is more benignant than the dewy eve —

* See Note.

Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy:
Nor doubt but HE to whom yon pine-trees nod
Their heads in sign of worship, Nature's God,
These humbler adorations will receive.

XIV.

MEMORIAL,

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF THUN.

"*DEM*
ANDENKEN
MEINES FREUNDES
ALOYS REDING
MDCCCXVIII."

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was Captain-General of the Swiss forces, which, with a courage and perseverance worthy of the cause, opposed the flagitious and too successful attempt of Buonaparte to subjugate their country.

AROUND a wild and woody hill,
A gravelled pathway treading,
We reached a votive Stone that bears
The name of Aloys Reding.

Well judged the Friend who placed it there
For silence and protection;
And haply with a finer care
Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West:
And, while in summer glory
He sets, his sinking yields a type
Of that pathetic story:

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss
Amid the grove to linger;
Till all is dim, save this bright Stone
Touched by his golden finger.

XV.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC CANTONS.

Doomed as we are our native dust
To wet with many a bitter shower,
It ill befits us to disdain
The altar, to deride the fane,
Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust
To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,
Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:
Hail to the firm, unmoving cross,
Aloft, where pines their branches toss!
And to the chapel far withdrawn,
That lurks by lonely ways!

Where'er we roam, along the brink
Of Rhine, or by the sweeping Po,
Through Alpine vale, or champaigne wide,
Whate'er we look on, at our side
Be Charity! — to bid us think,
And feel, if we would know.

XVI.

AFTER-THOUGHT.

O LIFE! without thy checkered scene
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,
Success and failure, could a ground
For magnanimity be found;
For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene?
Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach, —
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;
Heaven upon earth 's an empty boast;
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,
Mercy has placed within our reach
A portion of God's peace.

XVII.

SCENE ON THE LAKE OF BRIENTZ.

"WHAT know we of the Blest above
But that they sing and that they love?"
Yet, if they ever did inspire
A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,
Now, where those harvest Damsels float
Homeward in their rugged Boat,
(While all the ruffling winds are fled,
Each slumbering on some mountain's head,)
Now, surely, hath that gracious aid
Been felt, that influence is displayed.
Pupils of Heaven, in order stand
The rustic Maidens, every hand
Upon a Sister's shoulder laid, —
To chant, as glides the boat along,
A simple, but a touching, song;
To chant, as Angels do above,
The melodies of Peace in love!

XVIII.

ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF ANGELS.*

For gentlest uses, ofttimes Nature takes
The work of Fancy from her willing hands;

* See Note.

And such a beautiful creation makes
As renders needless spells and magic wands,
And for the boldest tale belief commands.
When first mine eyes beheld that famous Hill,
The sacred ENGELBERG, celestial Bands,
With intermingling motions soft and still,
Hung round its top, on wings that changed their hues at will.

Clouds do not name those Visitants; they were
The very Angels whose authentic lays,
Sung from that heavenly ground in middle air,
Made known the spot where piety should raise
A holy Structure to the Almighty's praise.
Resplendent Apparition! if in vain
My ears did listen, 't was enough to gaze;
And watch the slow departure of the train,
Whose skirts the glowing Mountain thirsted to detain.

XIX.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

MEEK Virgin Mother, more benign
Than fairest Star, upon the height
Of thy own mountain * set to keep

* Mount Righi.

Lone vigils through the hour of sleep,
What eye can look upon thy shrine
Untroubled at the sight?

These crowded offerings, as they hang
In sight of misery relieved,
Even these, without intent of theirs,
Report of comfortless despairs,
Of many a deep and cureless pang,
And confidence deceived.

To thee, in this aerial cleft,
As to a common centre, tend
All sufferers that no more rely
On mortal succor, — all who sigh
And pine, of human hope bereft,
Nor wish for earthly friend.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild!
Though plenteous flowers around thee blow,
Not only from the dreary strife
Of Winter, but the storms of life,
Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled,
Our Lady of the Snow.

Even for the Man who stops not here,
But down the irriguous valley hies,
Thy very name, O Lady! flings
O'er blooming fields and gushing springs
A tender sense of shadowy fear,
And chastening sympathies!

Nor falls that intermingling shade
To summer-gladsomeness unkind:
It chastens only to requite
With gleams of fresher, purer light;
While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade,
More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on! — a tempting downward way
A verdant path, before us lies;
Clear shines the glorious sun above;
Then give free course to joy and love,
Deeming the evil of the day
Sufficient for the wise.

XX.

EFFUSION,

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER OF TELL, AT ALTORF.

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew the Linden-tree against which his son is said to have been placed, when the father's archery was put to proof under circumstances so famous in Swiss story.

What though the Italian pencil wrought not here
Nor such fine skill as did the meed bestow
On Marathonian valor, yet the tear
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy show,
While narrow cares their limits overflow.

Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, warriors old,
Infants in arms, and ye, that, as ye go
Homeward or school-ward, ape what ye behold:
Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy bold!

And when that calm Spectatress from on high
Looks down, — the bright and solitary Moon,
Who never gazes but to beautify;
And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze of noon
Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune
That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls;
Then might the passing Monk receive a boon
Of saintly pleasure from these pictured walls,
While, on the warlike groups, the mellowing lustre
falls.

How blest the souls who when their trials come
Yield not to terror or despondency,
But face like that sweet Boy their mortal doom,
Whose head the ruddy apple tops, while he
Expectant stands beneath the linden-tree:
He quakes not like the timid forest game,
But smiles, — the hesitating shaft to free,
Assured that Heaven its justice will proclaim,
And to his father give its own unerring aim.

XXI.

THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ.

By antique Fancy trimmed, — though lowly, bred
To dignity, — in thee, O Schwytz! are seen
The genuine features of the golden mean;
Equality by Prudence governèd,
Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead;
And therefore art thou blest with peace, serene
As that of the sweet fields and meadows green
In unambitious compass round thee spread.
Majesty Berne, high on her guardian steep,
Holding a central station of command,
Might well be styled this noble body's Head;
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous intrenchments deep,
Its Heart; and ever may the heroic Land
Thy name, O Schwytz! in happy freedom keep.*

XXII.

IN HEARING THE "RANZ DES VACHES" ON THE TOP OF THE PASS OF ST. GOTHARD.

I listen, — but no faculty of mine
Avails those modulations to detect,

* Nearly five hundred years (says Ebel, speaking of the French Invasion) had elapsed, when, for the first time, foreign soldiers were seen upon the frontiers of this small Canton, to impose upon it the laws of their governors.

Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss affect
With tenderest passion ; leaving him to pine
(So fame reports) and die, — his sweet-breath'd kine
Remembering, and green Alpine pastures decked
With vernal flowers. Yet may we not reject
The tale as fabulous. — Here while I recline,
Mindful how others by this simple Strain
Are moved, for me, — upon this Mountain named
Of God himself from dread pre-eminence, —
Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,
Yield to the Music's touching influence ;
And joys of distant home my heart enchain.

XXIII.

FORT FUENTES.

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at the head of the Lake of Como, commanding views up the Valteline, and toward the town of Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direction is characterized by melancholy sublimity. We rejoiced at being favored with a distinct view of those Alpine heights; not, as we had expected from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds floating or stationary, — scatterings from heaven. The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately sculptured marble lying on the ground, records that the Fort had been erected by Count Fuentes in the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the Third; and the chapel, about twenty years after, by one of his descendants. Marble pillars of gateways are yet stand-

ng, and a considerable part of the Chapel walls: a smooth green turf has taken place of the pavement, and we could see no trace of altar or image; but everywhere something to remind one of former splendor, and of devastation and tumult. In our ascent we had passed abundance of wild vines intermingled with bushes: near the ruins were some ill tended, but growing willingly; and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are alike covered or adorned with a variety of flowers, among which the rose-colored pink was growing in great beauty. While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill. "How little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued here! Could we but transport this pretty Image to our own garden!" — Yet it seemed it would have been a pity any one should remove it from its couch in the wilderness, which may be its own for hundreds of years. — *Extract from Journal.*

Dread hour! when, upheaved by war's sulphurous blast,
This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian stone
So far from the holy inclosure was cast,
To couch in this thicket of brambles alone, —

To rest where the lizard may bask in the palm
Of his half-open hand, pure from blemish or speck,
And the green, gilded snake, without troubling the calm
Of the beautiful countenance, twine round his neck;

Where haply, (kind service to Piety due!)
When Winter the grove of its mantle bereaves

Some bird (like our own honored redbreast) may
strew
The desolate Slumberer with moss and with
leaves.

Fuentes once harbored the good and the brave,
Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure un-
known;
Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave
While the thrill of her fifes through the moun-
tains was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless ascent;—
O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway,
When the whirlwind of human destruction is spent,
Our tumults appeased, and our strifes passed
away!

XXIV.

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR.

SEEN FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO.

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2,000 feet, and, on one side, nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the traveller who pursues it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich

woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sea-like extent of plain fading into the sky and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps, unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

THOU sacred Pile! whose turrets rise
From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage,
Guarded by lone San Salvador;
Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,
To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice,
But ne'er to human rage!

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned
To rest the Universal Lord:
Why leap the fountains from their cells
Where everlasting Bounty dwells? —
That, while the Creature is sustained,
His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times, —
Let all remind the soul of heaven;
Our slack devotion needs them all;
And Faith — so oft of sense the thrall,
While she, by aid of Nature, climbs —
May hope to be forgiven.

Glory, and patriotic Love,
And all the Pomps of this frail "spot
Which men call Earth," have yearned to seek

Associate with the simply meek,
Religion in the sainted grove,
And in the hallowed grot.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks,
Of fainting hopes and backward wills,
Did mighty Tell repair of old, —
A Hero cast in Nature's mould,
Deliverer of the steadfast rocks
And of the ancient hills!

He, too, of battle-martyrs chief!
Who, to recall his daunted peers,
For victory shaped an open space,
By gathering with a wide embrace,
Into his single breast, a sheaf
Of fatal Austrian spears.*

XXV.

THE ITALIAN ITINERANT, AND THE SWISS GOATHERD.

PART I.

I.

Now that the farewell tear is dried,
Heaven prosper thee, be Hope thy guide!

* Arnold Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner. The event is one of the

Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy!
The wages of thy travel, joy!
Whether for London bound, to trill
Thy mountain notes with simple skill;
Or on thy head to poise a show
Of Images in seemly row, —
The graceful form of milk-white Steed,
Or Bird that soared with Ganymede;
Or through our hamlets thou wilt bear
The sightless Milton, with his hair
Around his placid temples curled;
And Shakespeare at his side, — a freight,
If clay could think and mind were weight,
For him who bore the world!
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy!
The wages of thy travel, joy!

II.

But thou, perhaps, (alert as free,
Though serving sage philosophy,)
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,
A Vender of the well-wrought Scale,
Whose sentient tube instructs to time
A purpose to a fickle clime:
Whether thou choose this useful part,
Or minister to finer art,
Though robbed of many a cherished dream,
And crossed by many a shattered scheme,

most famous in the annals of Swiss heroism; and pictures and prints of it are frequent throughout the country.

What stirring wonders wilt thou see
In the proud Isle of Liberty!
Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine
With thoughts which no delights can chase,
Recall a Sister's last embrace,
His Mother's neck entwine;
Nor shall forget the Maiden coy
That *would* have loved the bright-haired Boy!

III.

My Song, encouraged by the grace
That beams from his ingenuous face,
For this Adventurer scruples not
To prophesy a golden lot;
Due recompense, and safe return
To Como's steeps, — his happy bourne!
Where he, aloft in garden glade,
Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,
The towering maize, and prop the twig
That ill supports the luscious fig;
Or feed his eyes in paths sun-proof
With purple of the trellis-roof,
That through the jealous leaves escapes
From Cadenabbia's pendent grapes.
— O might he tempt that Goatherd-child
To share his wanderings! him whose look
Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,
So touchingly he smiled, —
As with a rapture caught from heaven, —
For unasked alms in pity given.

PART II.

I.

With nodding plumes, and lightly drest,
Like foresters in leaf-green vest,
The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground
For Tell's dread archery renowned,
Before the target stood, — to claim
The guerdon of the steadiest aim.
Loud was the rifle-gun's report, —
A startling thunder quick and short!
But, flying through the heights around,
Echo prolonged a telltale sound
Of hearts and hands alike "prepared
The treasures they enjoy to guard"!
And, if there be a favored hour
When Heroes are allowed to quit
The tomb, and on the clouds to sit
With tutelary power,
On their descendants shedding grace,
This was the hour, and that the place.

II.

But Truth inspired the Bards of old
When of an iron age they told,
Which to unequal laws gave birth,
And drove Astræa from the earth.
— A gentle Boy, (perchance with blood
As noble as the best endued,

But seemingly a thing despised;
Even by the sun and air unprized;
For not a tinge or flowery streak
Appeared upon his tender cheek,)
Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes,
Apart, beside his silent goats,
Sat watching in a forest shed,
Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head;
Mute as the snow upon the hill,
And, as the saint he prays to, still.
Ah, what avails heroic deed?
What liberty? if no defence
Be won for feeble Innocence.
Father of all! though wilful Manhood read
His punishment in soul-distress,
Grant to the morn of life its natural blessedness!

XXVI.

THE LAST SUPPER, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE REFECTORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA DELLA GRAZIA, MILAN.*

THOUGH searching damps and many an envious flaw
Have marred this work; the calm, ethereal grace,
The love deep-seated in the Saviour's face,
The mercy, goodness, have not failed to awe

* See Note.

The Elements; as they do melt and thaw
The heart of the beholder, — and erase
(At least for one rapt moment) every trace
Of disobedience to the primal law.
The annunciation of the dreadful truth
Made to the Twelve, survives: lip, forehead, cheek,
And hand reposing on the board in ruth
Of what it utters, while the unguilty seek
Unquestionable meanings, still bespeak
A labor worthy of eternal youth!

XXVII.

THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, 1820

High on her speculative tower
Stood Science waiting for the hour
When Sol was destined to endure
That darkening of his radiant face
Which Superstition strove to chase,
Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,
Through regions fair as Paradise
We gayly passed, — till Nature wrought
A silent and unlooked-for change,
That checked the desultory range
Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,
The waves danced round us as before,
As lightly, though of altered hue,
'Mid recent coolness, such as falls
At noontide from umbrageous walls
That screen the morning dew.

No vapor stretched its wings; no cloud
Cast far or near a murky shroud;
The sky an azure field displayed;
'T was sunlight sheathed and gently charmed
Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,
And as in slumber laid, —

Or something night and day between,
Like moonshine, — but the hue was green;
Still moonshine, without shadow, spread
On jutting rock, and curvèd shore,
Where gazed the peasant from his door
And on the mountain's head.

It tinged the Julian steeps, — it lay,
Lugano! on thy ample bay;
The solemnizing veil was drawn
O'er villas, terraces, and towers;
To Albogasio's olive bowers,
Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire
Hath passed to Milan's loftiest spire,

And there alights 'mid that aerial host
Of figures human and divine,*
White as the snows of Apennine
Indúrated by frost.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array
That guards the Temple night and day;
Angels she sees, that might from heaven have flown,
And Virgin-saints, who not in vain
Have striven by purity to gain
The beatific crown, —

Sees long-drawn files, concentric rings
Each narrowing above each; — the wings,
The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips,
The starry zone of sovereign height,† —
All steeped in this portentous light!
All suffering dim eclipse!

Thus after Man had fallen, (if aught
These perishable spheres have wrought
May with that issue be compared,)
Throngs of celestial visages,
Darkening like water in the breeze,
A holy sadness shared.

Lo! while I speak, the laboring Sun
His glad deliverance has begun:

* See Note.

† Above the highest circle of figures is a zone of metallic stars.

The cypress waves her sombre plume
More cheerily; and town and tower,
The vineyard and the olive-bower
Their lustre reassume!

O Ye, who guard and grace my home
While in far-distant lands we roam,
What countenance hath this Day put on for you?
While we looked round with favored eyes,
Did sullen mists hide lake and skies
And mountains from your view?

Or was it given you to behold
Like vision, pensive though not cold,
From the smooth breast of gay Winandermere?
Saw ye the soft yet awful veil
Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,
Helvellyn's brow severe?

I ask in vain, — and know far less
If sickness, sorrow, or distress
Have spared my Dwelling to this hour;
Sad blindness! but ordained to prove
Our faith in Heaven's unfailing love
And all-controlling power.

XXVIII.

THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS.

I.

How blest the Maid whose heart — yet free
From Love's uneasy sovereignty —
Beats with a fancy running high,
Her simple cares to magnify;
Whom Labor, never urged to toil,
Hath cherished on a healthful soil;
Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;
Whose heaviest sin it is to look
Askance upon her pretty Self
Reflected in some crystal brook;
Whom grief hath spared, — who sheds no tear
But in sweet pity; and can hear
Another's praise from envy clear.

II.

Such, (but, O lavish Nature! why
That dark, unfathomable eye,
Where lurks a Spirit that replies
To stillest mood of softest skies,
Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,
Another's first, and then her own?)
Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid,
Our Lady's laggard Votaress,
Halting beneath the chestnut shade

To accomplish there her loveliness:
Nice aid maternal fingers lend;
A Sister serves with slacker hand;
Then, glittering like a star, she joins the festal band.

III.

How blest (if truth may entertain
Coy fancy with a bolder strain)
The HELVETIAN Girl, — who daily braves,
In her light skiff, the tossing waves,
And quits the bosom of the deep
Only to climb the rugged steep!
— Say whence that modulated shout!
From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng?
Or does the greeting to a rout
Of giddy Bacchanals belong?
Jubilant outcry! rock and glade
Resounded, — but the voice obeyed
The breath of an Helvetian Maid.

IV.

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood;
Her courage animates the flood;
Her steps the elastic greensward meets,
Returning unreluctant sweets;
The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice
Aloud, saluted by her voice!
Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,
Be as thou art, — for through thy veins
The blood of Heroes runs its race!

And nobly wilt thou brook the chains
That, for the virtuous, Life prepares;
The fetters which the Matron wears;
The patriot Mother's weight of anxious cares!

v.

* "Sweet HIGHLAND Girl! a very shower
Of beauty was thy earthly dower,"
When thou didst flit before mine eyes,
Gay Vision under sullen skies,
While Hope and Love around thee played,
Near the rough falls of Inversneyd!
Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen
No breach of promise in the fruit?
Was joy, in following joy, as keen
As grief can be in grief's pursuit?
When youth had flown, did hope still bless
Thy goings, — or the cheerfulness
Of innocence survive to mitigate distress?

vi.

But from our course why turn, to tread
A way with shadows overspread;
Where what we gladliest would believe
Is feared as what may most deceive?
Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned,
But heath-bells from thy native ground,
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,

* See address to a Highland Girl, p. 13

Nor take one ray of light from thee;
For in my Fancy thou dost share
The gift of immortality;
And there shall bloom, with thee allied,
The Votaress by Lugano's side,
And that intrepid Nymph on Uri's steep descried!

XXIX.

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY BUONAPARTE FOR A TRIUMPHAL EDIFICE IN MILAN, NOW LYING BY THE WAY-SIDE IN THE SIMPLON PASS.

Ambition, — following down this far-famed slope
Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,
While clarions prate of kingdoms to be won, —
Perchance, in future ages, here may stop;
Taught to mistrust her flattering horoscope
By admonition from this prostrate Stone!
Memento uninscribed of Pride o'erthrown;
Vanity's hieroglyphic; a choice trope
In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the Rock,
Rest where thy course was stayed by Power Divine!
The Soul transported sees, from hint of thine,
Crimes which the great Avenger's hand provoke,
Hears combats whistling o'er the ensanguined heath
What groans! what shrieks! what quietness in death

XXX.

STANZAS,

COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLON PASS.

VALLOMBROSA! I longed in thy shadiest wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor,
To listen to ANIO'S precipitous flood,
When the stillness of evening hath deepened its roar
To range through the Temples of PÆSTUM, to muse
In POMPEII preserved by her burial in earth;
On pictures to gaze where they drank in their hues;
And murmur sweet songs on the ground of their birth!

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of Rome,
Could I leave them unseen, and not yield to regret?
With a hope (and no more) for a season to come,
Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent debt?
Thou fortunate Region! whose Greatness inurned
Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust;
Twice-glorified fields! if in sadness I turned
From your infinite marvels, the sadness was just.

Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois retires
From dew-sprinkled grass to heights guarded with snow,
Toward the mists that hang over the land of my Sires,
From the climate of myrtles contented I go.

My thoughts become bright like yon edging of Pines
On the steep's lofty verge: how it blackened the air!
But, touched from behind by the Sun, it now shines
With threads that seem part of his own silver hair

Though the toil of the way with dear Friends we
divide,
Though by the same zephyr our temples be fanned
As we rest in the cool orange-bower side by side,
A yearning survives which few hearts shall with-
stand:
Each step hath its value while homeward we
move; —
O joy when the girdle of England appears!
What moment in life is so conscious of love,
Of love in the heart made more happy by tears?

XXXI.

ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI.

What beast of chase hath broken from the cover?
Stern Gemmi listens to as full a cry,
As multitudinous a harmony
Of sounds, as rang the heights of Latmos over,
When, from the soft couch of her sleeping Lover
Upstarting, Cynthia skimmed the mountain-dew
In keen pursuit, — and gave, where'er she flew

Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.
A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on
Through the bleak concave, wakes this wondrous chime
Of aery voices locked in unison, —
Faint, — far-off, — near, — deep, — solemn and sublime! —
So, from the body of one guilty deed,
A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting thoughts proceed!

XXXII.

PROCESSIONS.

Suggested on a Sabbath Morning in the Vale of Chamouny

To appease the Gods; or public thanks to yield;
Or to solicit knowledge of events,
Which in her breast Futurity concealed;
And that the Past might have its true intents
Feelingly told by living monuments, —
Mankind of yore were prompted to devise
Rites such as yet Persepolis presents
Graven on her cankered walls, solemnities
That moved in long array before admiring eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful state
Thick boughs of palm, and willows from the brook

Marched round the altar, — to commemorate
How, when their course they through the desert took,
Guided by signs which ne'er the sky forsook,
They lodged in leafy tents and cabins low;
Green boughs were borne, while, for the blast that shook
Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,
Shouts rise, and storms of sound from lifted trumpets blow!

And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove
Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing wells,
The priests and damsels of Ammonian Jove
Provoked responses with shrill canticles;
While, in a ship begirt with silver bells,
They round his altar bore the hornèd God,
Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells
Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,
When universal sea the mountains overflowed.

Why speak of Roman Pomps? the haughty claims
Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars;
The feast of Neptune, — and the Cereal Games,
With images, and crowns, and empty cars;
The dancing Salii, — on the shields of Mars
Smiting with fury; and a deeper dread
Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars
Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head
Of Cybelè was seen, sublimely turreted!

At length a Spirit more subdued and soft
Appeared, to govern Christian pageantries:
The Cross, in calm procession borne aloft,
Moved to the chant of sober litanies.
Even such, this day, came wafted on the breeze
From a long train, — in hooded vestments fair
Enwrapt, — and winding, between Alpine trees
Spiry and dark, around their House of Prayer,
Below the icy bed of bright ARGENTIERE.

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,
The pageant haunts me as it met our eyes!
Still, with those white-robed Shapes, — a living
Stream, —
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise *
For the same service, by mysterious ties;
Numbers exceeding credible account
Of number, pure and silent Votaries
Issuing or issued from a wintry fount;
The impenetrable heart of that exalted Mount!

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam
While they the Church engird with motion slow,
A product of that awful Mountain seem,
Poured from his vaults of everlasting snow;
Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright row,
Not swans descending with the stealthy tide,
A livelier sisterly resemblance show,

* See Note.

Than the fair Forms, that in long order glide,
Bear to the glacier band, — those Shapes aloft described.

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs
Of that licentious craving in the mind
To act the God among external things,
To blind, on apt suggestion, or unbind;
And marvel not that antique Faith inclined
To crowd the world with metamorphosis,
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned;
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou miss,
Avoid these sights; nor brood o'er Fable's dark abyss!

XXXIII.

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

THE lamented Youth whose untimely death gave occasion to these elegiac verses, was Frederick William Goddard, from Boston in North America. He was in his twentieth year, and had resided for some time with a clergyman in the neighborhood of Geneva for the completion of his education. Accompanied by a fellow-pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out on a Swiss tour, when it was his misfortune to fall in with a friend of mine who was hastening to join our party. The travellers, after spending a day together on the road from Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other at night, the young men having intended to proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the morning my friend found his new acquaintances, who were informed of the object of his journey, and the friends he was in

pursuit of, equipped to accompany him. We met at Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. Goddard and his fellow-student became in consequence our travelling companions for a couple of days. We ascended the Righi together; and, after contemplating the sunrise from that noble mountain, we separated at an hour and on a spot well suited to the parting of those who were to meet no more. Our party descended through the valley of Our Lady of the Snow, and our late companions, to Art. We had hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva; but on the third succeeding day (on the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset in a boat while crossing the Lake of Zurich. His companion saved himself by swimming, and was hospitably received in the mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the eastern coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the same gentleman, who generously performed all the rites of hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He caused a handsome mural monument to be erected in the church of Küsnacht, which records the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the traveller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

LULLED by the sound of pastoral bells,
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,
From the dread summit of the Queen *
Of Mountains, through a deep ravine,
Where, in her holy chapel, dwells
"Our Lady of the Snow."

The sky was blue, the air was mild;
Free were the streams and green the bowers
As if, to rough assaults unknown,

* Mount Righi, — Regina Montium.

The genial spot had *ever* shown
A countenance that as sweetly smiled, —
The face of summer hours.

And we were gay, our hearts at ease;
With pleasure dancing through the frame
We journeyed; all we knew of care,
Our path that straggled here and there;
Of trouble, but the fluttering breeze;
Of Winter, but a name.

If foresight could have rent the veil
Of three short days — but hush! — no more!
Calm is the grave, and calmer none
Than that to which thy cares are gone,
Thou Victim of the stormy gale,
Asleep on ZURICH'S shore!

O GODDARD! — what art thou? — a name, —
A sunbeam followed by a shade!
Nor more, for aught that time supplies,
The great, the experienced, and the wise:
Too much from this frail earth we claim,
And therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild,
Where, from a deep lake's mighty urn,
Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave,
A sea-green river, proud to lave,
With current swift and undefiled,
The towers of old LUCERNE.

We parted upon solemn ground
Far-lifted towards the unfading sky;
But all our thoughts were *then* of Earth,
That gives to common pleasures birth;
And nothing in our hearts we found
That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathizing Powers of Air,
Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,
Herbs moistened by Virginian dew,
A most untimely grave to strew,
Whose turf may never know the care
Of *kindred* human hands!

Beloved by every gentle Muse
He left his Transatlantic home:
Europe, a realized romance,
Had opened on his eager glance;
What present bliss! — what golden views!
What stores for years to come!

Though lodged within no vigorous frame,
His soul her daily tasks renewed,
Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings
High poised, — or as the wren that sings
In shady places, to proclaim
Her modest gratitude.

Not vain is sadly-uttered praise;
The words of truth's memorial vow
Are sweet as morning fragrance shed

From flowers 'mid GOLDAU'S ruins bred;
As evening's fondly-lingering rays,
On RIGHI'S silent brow.

Lamented Youth! to thy cold clay
Fit obsequies the Stranger paid;
And piety shall guard the Stone
Which hath not left the spot unknown
Where the wild waves resigned their prey, —
And *that* which marks thy bed.

And when thy Mother weeps for thee,
Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;
This tribute from a casual Friend
A not unwelcome aid may lend,
To feed the tender luxury,
The rising pang to smother.*

* The persuasion here expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted Mother felt was derived from this tribute to her Son's memory, a fact which the author learned, at his own residence, from her Daughter, who visited Europe some years afterwards. — Goldau is one of the villages desolated by the fall of part of the Mountain Rossberg.

XXXIV.

SKY-PROSPECT, — FROM THE PLAIN OF FRANCE.

Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape
Of a proud Ararat! and, thereupon,
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done!
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape;
There, combats a huge crocodile, agape
A golden spear to swallow! and that brown
And massy grove, so near yon blazing town,
Stirs and recedes, destruction to escape!
Yet all is harmless, — as the Elysian shades
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed repose, —
Silently disappears, or quickly fades:
Meek Nature's evening comment on the shows,
That for oblivion take their daily birth
From all the fuming vanities of Earth!

XXXV.

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOR OF BOULOGNE.*

Why cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,
Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son
Of England, who in hope her coast had won,
His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er?
Well, let him pace this noted beach once more,
That gave the Roman his triumphal shells;
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells

* See Note.

Haughtily shake, a dreaming Conqueror! —
Enough: my Country's cliffs I can behold,
And proudly think, beside the chafing sea,
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,
And folly cursed with endless memory:
These local recollections ne'er can cloy;
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy!

XXXVI.

AFTER LANDING. — THE VALLEY OF DOVER. Nov., 1820.

WHERE be the noisy followers of the game
Which faction breeds; the turmoil where? that passed
Through Europe, echoing from the newsman's blast,
And filled our hearts with grief for England's shame.
Peace greets us; — rambling on without an aim,
We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
To ruminate, couched on the grassy lea;
And hear far off the mellow horn proclaim
The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder sound
Stirs not; enrapt I gaze with strange delight,
While consciousnesses, not to be disowned,
Here only serve a feeling to invite
That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,
And makes this rural stillness more profound.

XXXVII.

AT DOVER.

From the Pier's head, musing, and with increase
Of wonder, I have watched this sea-side Town,
Under the white cliff's battlemented crown,
Hushed to a depth of more than Sabbath peace:
The streets and quays are thronged, but why disown
Their natural utterance? whence this strange release
From social noise,—silence elsewhere unknown?—
A Spirit whispered, "Let all wonder cease;
Ocean's o'erpowering murmurs have set free
Thy sense from pressure of life's common din;
As the dread Voice that speaks from out the sea
Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of Time
Doth deaden, shocks of tumult, shrieks of crime,
The shouts of folly, and the groans of sin."

XXXVIII.

DESULTORY STANZAS.

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS FROM THE PRESS.

Is then the final page before me spread,
Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?
Presumptuous Book! too forward to be read,
How can I give thee license to depart?

One tribute more: unbidden feelings start
Forth from their coverts; slighted objects rise;
My spirit is the scene of such wild art
As on Parnassus rules, when lightning flies,
Visibly leading on the thunder's harmonies.

All that I saw returns upon my view,
All that I heard comes back upon my ear,
All that I felt this moment doth renew;
And where the foot with no unmanly fear
Recoiled, — and wings alone could travel, — there
I move at ease; and meet contending themes
That press upon me, crossing the career
Of recollections vivid as the dreams
Of midnight, — cities, plains, forests, and mighty streams.

Where Mortal never breathed, I dare to sit
Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew,
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power! — and yet
What are they but a wreck and residue,
Whose only business is to perish? — true
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons of Time
Labor their proper greatness to subdue;
Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime
Where life and rapture flow in plenitude sublime.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge
Across thy long, deep Valley, furious Rhone!
Arch that *here* rests upon the granite ridge

Of Monte Rosa, — *there* on frailer stone
Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's cone;
And from that arch down-looking on the Vale,
The aspect I behold of every zone;
A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,
Blithe Autumn's purple crown, and Winter's icy
mail!

Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks,*
Down the main avenue my sight can range:
And all its branchy vales, and all that lurks
Within them, church, and town, and hut, and grange
For my enjoyment meet in vision strange;
Snows, torrents; — to the region's utmost bound,
Life, Death, in amicable interchange; —
But list! the avalanche, — the hush profound
That follows, — yet more awful than that awful
sound!

Is not the chamois suited to his place?
The eagle worthy of her ancestry?
— Let Empires fall; but ne'er shall ye disgrace
Your noble birthright, ye that occupy
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount,† there judge of fit and right,
In simple democratic majesty;
Soft breezes fanning your rough brows, — the might
And purity of nature spread before your sight!

* At the head of the Vallais. See Note. † See Note.

From this appropriate Court, renowned LUCERNE
Calls me to pace her honored Bridge,* — that cheers
The Patriot's heart with pictures rude and stern,
An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.
Like portraiture, from loftier source, endears
That work of kindred frame, which spans the lake
Just at the point of issue, where it fears
The form and motion of a stream to take;
Where it begins to stir, *yet* voiceless as a snake.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral rolled,
This long-roofed vista penetrate, — but see,
One after one, its tablets, that unfold
The whole design of Scripture history;
From the first tasting of the fatal tree,
Till the bright star appeared in eastern skies,
Announcing, ONE was born mankind to free;
His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice;
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes.

Our pride misleads, our timid likings kill.
— Long may these homely Works devised of old,
These simple efforts of Helvetian skill,
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold
The State, — the Country's destiny to mould;
Turning, for them who pass, the common dust
Of servile opportunity to gold,

* See Note.

Filling the soul with sentiments august, —
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the just!

No more; Time halts not in his noiseless march,
Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid flood;
Life slips from underneath us, like that arch
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood,
Earth stretched below, heaven in our neighborhood.
Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy way;
Go forth, and please the gentle and the good;
Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace some future Lay.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY

1837.

TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

COMPANION! by whose buoyant spirit cheered,
In whose experience trusting, day by day
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,
These records take, and happy should I be
Were but the gift a meet return to thee
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, *Feb.* 14*th*, 1842.

THE Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular, "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820," and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

I.

MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE.

April, 183..

Ye Apennines! with all your fertile vales
Deeply embosomed, and your winding shores
Of either sea, an Islander by birth,
A Mountaineer by habit, would resound
Your praise, in meet accordance with your claims
Bestowed by Nature, or from man's great deeds
Inherited: — presumptuous thought! — it fled
Like vapor, like a towering cloud, dissolved.
Not, therefore, shall my mind give way to sad
ness; —
Yon snow-white torrent-fall, plumb down it drops,
Yet ever hangs or seems to hang in air,
Lulling the leisure of that high perched town,
Aquapendente, in her lofty site,
Its neighbor and its namesake, — town, and flood
Forth flashing out of its own gloomy chasm
Bright sunbeams, — the fresh verdure of this lawn
Strewn with gray rocks, and on the horizon's verge
O'er intervenient waste, through glimmering haze
Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped hill
With fractured summit, no indifferent sight
To travellers, from such comforts as are thine,
Bleak Radicofani! escaped with joy, —
These are before me; and the varied scene
May well suffice, till noontide's sultry heat

Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind
Passive yet pleased. What! with this Broom in flower
Close at my side! She bids me fly to greet
Her sisters, soon like her to be attired
With golden blossoms opening at the feet
Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting given,
Given with a voice and by a look returned
Of old companionship, Time counts not minutes,
Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar fields,
The local Genius hurries me aloft,
Transported over that cloud-wooing hill,
Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,
With dream-like smoothness, to Helvellyn's top,
There to alight upon crisp moss and range,
Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,
Of visual sovereignty, — hills multitudinous,
(Not Apennine can boast of fairer,) hills
Pride of two nations, wood and lake and plains,
And prospect right below of deep coves shaped
By skeleton arms, that, from the mountain's trunk
Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual moan
Struggling for liberty, while undismayed
The shepherd struggles with them. Onward thence
And downward by the skirt of Greenside fell,
And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glencoign,
Places forsaken now, though loving still
The Muses, as they loved them in the days
Of the old minstrels and the border bards. —
But here am I fast bound; and let it pass,

The simple rapture; — who that travels far
To feed his mind with watchful eyes could share
Or wish to share it? — One there surely was,
"The Wizard of the North," with anxious hope
Brought to this genial climate, when disease
Preyed upon body and mind, — yet not the less
Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words
That spake of bards and minstrels; and his spirit
Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's brow,
Where once together, in his day of strength,
We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free
From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.

Years followed years, and when, upon the eve
Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought turned,
Or by another's sympathy was led,
To this bright land, Hope was for him no friend,
Knowledge no help; Imagination shaped
No promise. Still, in more than ear-deep seats,
Survives for me, and cannot but survive,
The tone of voice which wedded borrowed words
To sadness not their own, when, with faint smile,
Forced by intent to take from speech its edge,
He said, "When I am there, although 't is fair,
'T will be another Yarrow." Prophecy
More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's shores
Soon witnessed, and the City of Seven Hills,
Her sparkling fountains, and her mouldering tombs
And more than all, that Eminence which showed
Her splendors, seen, not felt, the while he stood

A few short steps (painful they were) apart
From Tasso's Convent-haven and retired grave.

Peace to their Spirits! why should Poesy
Yield to the lure of vain regret, and hover
In gloom on wings with confidence outspread
To move in sunshine? — Utter thanks, my Soul!
Tempered with awe, and sweetened by compassion
For them who in the shades of sorrow dwell,
That I — so near the term to human life
Appointed by man's common heritage,
Frail as the frailest, one withal (if that
Deserve a thought) but little known to fame —
Am free to rove where Nature's loveliest looks,
Art's noblest relics, History's rich bequests,
Failed to reanimate and but feebly cheered
The whole world's Darling, — free to rove at will
O'er high and low, and if requiring rest,
Rest from enjoyment only.
Thanks poured forth
For what thus far hath blessed my wanderings,
thanks
Fervent but humble as the lips can breathe
Where gladness seems a duty, et me guard
Those seeds of expectation which the fruit
Already gathered in this favored Land
Enfolds within its core The faith be mine,
That He who guides and governs all, approves
When gratitude, though disciplined to look
Beyond these transient spheres, doth wear a crown

Of earthly hope put on with trembling hand;
Nor is least pleased, we trust, when golden beams,
Reflected through the mists of age, from hours
Of innocent delight, remote or recent,
Shoot but a little way — 't is all they can —
Into the doubtful future. Who would keep
Power must resolve to cleave to it through life,
Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.
Saints would not grieve nor guardian angels frown
If one — while tossed, as was my lot to be,
In a frail bark urged by two slender oars
Over waves rough and deep, that, when they broke,
Dashed their white foam against the palace-walls
Of Genoa the superb — should there be led
To meditate upon his own appointed tasks,
However humble in themselves, with thoughts
Raised and sustained by memory of him
Who oftentimes within those narrow bounds
Rocked on the surge, there tried his spirit's strength
And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his ship
To lay a new world open.
Nor less prized
Be those impressions which incline the heart
To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,
Bend that way her desires. The dew, the storm, —
The dew whose moisture fell in gentle drops
On the small hyssop destined to become,
By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,
A purifying instrument, — the storm
That shook on Lebanon the cedar's top

And as it shook, enabling the blind roots
Further to force their way, endowed its trunk
With magnitude and strength fit to uphold
The glorious temple, — did alike proceed
From the same gracious will, were both an offspring
Of bounty infinite.
Between Powers that aim
Higher to lift their lofty heads, impelled
By no profane ambition, Powers that thrive
By conflict, and their opposites, that trust
In lowliness, — a mid-way tract there lies
Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind
Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-aged, and
Old,
From century on to century, must have known
The emotion, — nay, more fitly were it said, —
The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep
Into my spirit, when I paced, inclosed
In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth floor
Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral slabs,
And through each window's open fret-work looked
O'er the blank Area of sacred earth
Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply delved
In precincts nearer to the Saviour's tomb,
By hands of men, humble as brave, who fought
For its deliverance, — a capacious field
That to descendants of the dead it holds
And to all living mute memento breathes,
More touching far than aught which on the walls
Is pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,

Of the changed City's long-departed power,
Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as they are,
Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.
And, high above that length of cloistral roof,
Peering in air and backed by azure sky,
To kindred contemplations ministers
The Baptistery's dome, and that which swells
From the Cathedral pile; and with the twain
Conjoined, in prospect mutable or fixed,
(As hurry on in eagerness the feet,
Or pause,) the summit of the Leaning Tower.
Nor less remuneration waits on him
Who, having left the Cemetery, stands
In the Tower's shadow, of decline and fall
Admonished not without some sense of fear,
Fear that soon vanishes before the sight
Of splendor unextinguished, pomp unscathed,
And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,
And for itself, the assemblage, grand and fair
To view, and for the mind's consenting eye
A type of age in man, upon its front
Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence
Of past exploits, nor fondly after more
Struggling against the stream of destiny,
But with its peaceful majesty content.
— O what a spectacle at every turn
The Place unfolds, from pavement skinned with
moss,
Or grass-grown spaces, where the heaviest foot
Provokes no echoes, but must softly tread;

Where Solitude with Silence paired stops short
Of Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe
Decay submits not.
But where'er my steps
Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with care
Those images of genial beauty, oft
Too lovely to be pensive in themselves,
But by reflection made so, which do best
And fitliest serve to crown with fragrant wreaths
Life's cup, when almost filled with years, like mine.
— How lovely robed in forenoon light and shade,
Each ministering to each, didst thou appear,
Savona, Queen of territory fair
As aught that marvellous coast thro' all its length
Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remembrance holds
As a selected treasure thy one cliff,
That, while it wore for melancholy crest
A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to have
Clinging to its steep sides a thousand herbs
And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave proof how
kind
The breath of air can be where earth had else
Seemed churlish. And behold, both far and near,
Garden and field all decked with orange bloom,
And peach and citron, in Spring's mildest breeze
Expanding; and, along the smooth shore curved
Into a natural port, a tideless sea,
To that mild breeze with motion and with voice
Softly responsive; and, attuned to all
Those vernal charms of sight and sound, appeared

Smooth space of turf which from the guardian fort
Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April green,
In coolest climes too fugitive, might even here
Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer stay
Than his unmitigated beams allow,
Nor plead in vain, if beauty could preserve
From mortal change aught that is born on earth
Or doth on time depend.
While on the brink
Of that high Convent-crested cliff I stood,
Modest Savona! over all did brood
A pure poetic Spirit, — as the breeze,
Mild, — as the verdure, fresh, — the sunshine, bright, —
Thy gentle Chiabrera! — not a stone,
Mural or level with the trodden floor,
In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest
Missed not the truth, retains a single name
Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,
To whose dear memories his sepulchral verse
Paid simple tribute, such as might have flowed
From the clear spring of a plain English heart,
Say rather, one in native fellowship
With all who want not skill to couple grief
With praise, as genuine admiration prompts.
The grief, the praise, are severed from their dust.
Yet in his page the records of that worth
Survive, uninjured; — glory then to words,
Honor to word-preserving Arts, and hail,
Ye kindred local influences, that still,

If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,
Await my steps when they the breezy height
Shall range of philosophic Tusculum;
Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish
To meet the shade of Horace by the side
Of his Blandusian fount; or I invoke
His presence to point out the spot where once
He sat, and eulogized with earnest pen
Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate desires;
And all the immunities of rural life
Extolled, behind Vacuna's crumbling fane.
Or let me loiter, soothed with what is given,
Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,
Parthenope's Domain, Virgilian haunt,
Illustrated with never-dying verse,
And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,
Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands
Endeared.

And who, — if not a man as cold
In heart as dull in brain, — while pacing ground
Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards, high minds
Out of her early struggles well inspired
To localize heroic acts, — could look
Upon the spots with undelighted eye,
Though even to their last syllable the Lays
And very names of those who gave them birth
Have perished? — Verily, to her utmost depth,
Imagination feels what Reason fears not
To recognize, the lasting virtue lodged
In those bold fictions that, by deeds assigned

To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race,
And others like in fame, created Powers
With attributes from History derived,
By Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,
Through marvellous felicity of skill,
With something more propitious to high aims
Than either, pent within her separate sphere,
Can oft with justice claim.
And not disdaining
Union with those primeval energies
To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your height,
Christian Traditions! at my Spirit's call
Descend, and on the brow of ancient Rome,
As she survives in ruin, manifest
Your glories mingled with the brightest hues
Of her memorial halo, fading, fading,
But never to be extinct while Earth endures.
O, come, if undishonored by the prayer,
From all her Sanctuaries! — Open for my feet,
Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a glimpse
Of the Devout, as, 'mid your glooms convened
For safety, they of yore enclasped the Cross
On knees that ceased from trembling, or intoned
Their orisons with voices half suppressed,
But sometimes heard, or fancied to be heard,
Even at this hour.
And thou Mamertine prison,
Into that vault receive me from whose depth
Issues, revealed in no presumptuous vision,
Albeit lifting human to divine,

A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic Keys
Grasped in his hand; and lo! with upright sword
Prefiguring his own impendent doom,
The Apostle of the Gentiles; both prepared
To suffer pains with heathen scorn and hate
Inflicted; — blessed Men, for so to Heaven
They follow their dear Lord!
Time flows, — nor winds,
Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,
But many a benefit borne upon his breast
For human-kind sinks out of sight, is gone,
No one knows how; nor seldom is put forth
An angry arm that snatches good away,
Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream
Has to our generation brought, and brings
Innumerable gains; yet we, who now
Walk in the light of day, pertain full surely
To a chilled age, most pitiably shut out
From that which *is* and actuates, by forms,
Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact
Minutely linked with diligence uninspired,
Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,
By godlike insight. To this fate is doomed
Science, wide-spread and spreading still as be
Her conquests, in the world of sense made known.
So with the internal mind it fares; and so
With morals, trusting, in contempt or fear
Of vital principle's controlling law,
To her purblind guide, Expediency; and so
Suffers religious faith. Elate with view

Of what is won, we overlook or scorn
The best that should keep pace with it, and must,
Else more and more the general mind will droop
Even as if bent on perishing. There lives
No faculty within us which the Soul
Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal demands,
For dignity not placed beyond her reach,
Zealous coöperation of all means
Given or acquired, to raise us from the mire,
And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.
By gross Utilities enslaved, we need
More of ennobling impulse from the past,
If to the future aught of good must come
Sounder and therefore holier than the ends
Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,
We covet as supreme. O grant the crown
That Wisdom wears, or take his treacherous staff
From Knowledge! — If the Muse, whom I have served
This day, be mistress of a single pearl
Fit to be placed in that pure diadem,
Then not in vain, under these chestnut-boughs
Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul
To transports from the secondary founts
Flowing of time and place, and paid to both
Due homage; nor shall fruitlessly have striven,
By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in verse
Accordant meditations, which in times
Vexed and disordered, as our own, may shed
Influence, at least among a scattered few,

To soberness of mind and peace of heart
Friendly; as here to my repose hath been
This flowering broom's dear neighborhood, the light
And murmur issuing from yon pendent flood,
And all the varied landscape. Let us now
Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent Rome.*

II.

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME.

I saw far off the dark top of a Pine
Look like a cloud, — a slender stem the tie
That bound it to its native earth, — poised high
'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,
Striving in peace each other to outshine.
But when I learned the Tree was living there,
Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's care,
O what a gush of tenderness was mine!
The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky so bright
And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of home,
Death-parted friends, and days too swift in flight,
Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
(Then first apparent from the Pincian Height)
Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome.†

* See Note. † See Note.

III.

AT ROME.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill?
Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock,
Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still
That name, a local Phantom proud to mock
The Traveller's expectation? — Could our Will
Destroy the ideal Power within, 't were done
Through what men see and touch, — slaves wandering on,
Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught skill.
Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh;
Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn,
From that depression raised, to mount on high
With stronger wing, more clearly to discern
Eternal things; and, if need be, defy
Change, with a brow not insolent, though stern.

IV.

AT ROME. — REGRETS. — IN ALLUSION TO NIEBUHR AND OTHER MODERN HISTORIANS.

Those old credulities, to nature dear,
Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock
Of History, stripped naked as a rock
Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?
The glory of Infant Rome must disappear,

Her morning splendors vanish, and their place
Know them no more. If Truth, who veiled her face
With those bright beams, yet hid it not, must steer
Henceforth a humbler course perplexed and slow,
One solace yet remains for us who came
Into this world in days when story lacked
Severe research, that in our hearts we know
How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,
Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

V.

CONTINUED.

Complacent Fictions were they, yet the same
Involved a history of no doubtful sense,
History that proves by inward evidence
From what a precious source of truth it came.
Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have dared
Such deeds to paint, such characters to frame,
But for coeval sympathy prepared
To greet with instant faith their loftiest claim.
None but a noble people could have loved
Flattery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded style:
Not in like sort the Runic Scald was moved;
He, nursed 'mid savage passions that defile
Humanity, sang feats that well might call
For the bloodthirsty mead of Odin's riotous Hall

VI.

PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN.

Forbear to deem the Chronicler unwise,
Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,
Who, gathering up all that Time's envious tooth
Has spared of sound and grave realities,
Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries,
Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,
That might have drawn down Clio from the skies
To vindicate the majesty of truth.
Such was her office while she walked with men,
A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire,
All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme might be,
Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,
And taught her faithful servants how the lyre
Should animate, but not mislead, the pen.*

VII.

AT ROME.

They who have seen the noble Roman's scorn
Break forth at thought of laying down his head
When the blank day is over, garreted
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn
To night, the desecrated floors are worn

* Quem virum .... lyra ....
.... sumes celebrare Clio?

By feet of purse-proud strangers; they who have
read
In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shed,
How patiently the weight of wrong is borne;
They who have heard some learned Patriot treat
Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole theme,
From ancient Rome, downwards through that
bright dream
Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat
Of rival glory; — they, fallen Italy,
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of Thee!

VIII.

NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST. PETER'S.

Long has the dew been dried on tree and lawn;
O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon
Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;
To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn,
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant fawn,
Save insect-swarms that hum in air afloat,
Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,
Startling and shrill as that which roused the dawn.
— Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the nerve
Shrinks from the note as from a mistimed thing.
Oft for a holy warning may it serve,
Charged with remembrance of *his* sudden sting.
His bitter tears, whose name the Papal Chair
And yon resplendent Church are proud to bear

IX.

AT ALBANO.

Days passed, — and Monte Calvo would not clear
His head from mist; and, as the wind sobbed through
Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,
My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear
Found casual vent. She said, "Be of good cheer
Our yesterday's procession did not sue
In vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,
Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled to hear,
But not in scorn: — the Matron's Faith may lack
The heavenly sanction needed to insure
Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward track
Stops not at this low point, nor wants the lure
Of flowers the Virgin without fear may own,
For by her Son's blest hand the seed was sown.

X.

Near Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove
Perched on an olive branch, and heard her cooing
'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were wooing
While all things present told of joy and love.
But restless Fancy left that olive grove
To hail the exploratory Bird renewing
Hope for the few, who, at the world's undoing,
On the great flood were spared to live and move.

O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove and bough
Brought to the ark are coming evermore,
Given though we seek them not, but, while we plough
This sea of life without a visible shore,
Do neither promise ask nor grace implore
In what alone is ours, the living Now.

XI.

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS, LOOKING TOWARDS ROME.

Forgive, illustrious Country! these deep sighs,
Heaved less for thy bright plains and hills bestrown
With monuments decayed or overthrown,
For all that tottering stands or prostrate lies,
Than for like scenes in moral vision shown,
Ruin perceived for keener sympathies;
Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her gaudy crown;
Virtues laid low, and mouldering energies.
Yet why prolong this mournful strain? — Fallen
Power,
Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might provoke
Verse to glad notes prophetic of the hour
When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy double yoke,
And enter, with prompt aid from the Most High,
On the third stage of thy great destiny.

XII.

NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE.

When here with Carthage Rome to conflict came,
An earthquake, mingling with the battle's shock,
Checked not its rage; unfelt the ground did rock,
Sword dropped not, javelin kept its deadly aim. —
Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that day's shame,
Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure,
Save in this Rill that took from blood the name *
Which yet it bears, sweet Stream! as crystal pure.
So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof
From the true guidance of humanity,
Through Time and Nature's influence, purify
Their spirit; or, unless they for reproof
Or warning serve, thus let them ail, on ground
That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

XIII.

NEAR THE SAME LAKE.

For action born, existing to be tried,
Powers manifold we have that intervene
To stir the heart that would too closely screen
Her peace from images to pain allied.
What wonder if at midnight, by the side

* Sanguinetto.

Of Sanguinetto or broad Thrasymene,
The clang of arms is heard, and phantoms glide,
Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight seen;
And singly thine, O vanquished chief! whose corse,
Unburied, lay hid under heaps of slain?
But who is he? — the Conqueror. Would he force
His way to Rome? Ah, no! round hill and plain
Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong command,
This spot, — his shadowy death-cup in his hand.

XIV.

THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA.

MAY 25TH, 1837.

LIST! — 't was the Cuckoo. — O, with what delight
Heard I that voice! and catch it now, though faint,
Far off and faint, and melting into air,
Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again!
Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,
Although invisible as Echo's self,
Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy Creature,
For this unthought-of greeting!
While allured
From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,
We have pursued, through various lands, a long
And pleasant course; flower after flower has blown,
Embellishing the ground that gave them birth

With aspects novel to my sight; but still
Most fair, most welcome, when they drank the dew
In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,
For old remembrance' sake. And oft, — where Spring
Displayed her richest blossoms among files
Of Orange-trees bedecked with glowing fruit
Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade
Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour,
The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy, —
Oft have I heard the Nightingale and Thrush
Blending as in a common English grove
Their love-songs; but, where'er my feet might roam,
Whate'er assemblages of new and old,
Strange and familiar, might beguile the way,
A gratulation from that vagrant Voice
Was wanting; — and most happily till now.

For see, Laverna! mark the far-famed Pile,
High on the brink of that precipitous rock,
Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth
It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned
In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience.
By a few Monks, a stern society,
Dead to the world and scorning earth-born joys.
Nay, — though the hopes that drew, the fears that drove,
St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide
Among these sterile heights of Apennine,
Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House, have ceased

To bind his spiritual progeny with rules
Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live, —
His milder Genius (thanks to the good God
That made us) over those severe restraints
Of mind, that dread, heart-freezing discipline,
Doth sometimes here predominate, and works
By unsought means for gracious purposes;
For earth through heaven, for heaven, by change-
ful earth
Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though he were above the power of
sense,
Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart
Of that once sinful Being overflowed
On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,
And every shape of creature they sustain,
Divine affections; and with beast and bird
(Stilled from afar — such marvel story tells —
By casual outbreak of his passionate words,
And from their own pursuits in field or grove
Drawn to his side by look or act of love
Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)
He wont to hold companionship so free,
So pure, so fraught with knowledge and delight,
As to be likened in his Followers' minds
To that which our first Parents, ere the fall
From their high state darkened the Earth with
fear,
Held with all Kinds in Eden's blissful bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the austere Band
Who breathe the air he breathed, tread where he trod,
Some true partakers of his loving spirit
Do still survive, and, with those gentle hearts
Consorted, others, in the power, the faith,
Of a baptized imagination, prompt
To catch from Nature's humblest monitors
Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though pale
With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by years,
Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,
Seated alone, with forehead skyward raised,
Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed
By the joint pressure of his musing mood
And habit of his vow. That ancient Man, —
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked,
As we approached the Convent gate, aloft
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,
A young Ascetic, — Poet, Hero, Sage,
He might have been, Lover belike he was, —
If they received into a conscious ear
The notes whose first faint greeting startled me,
Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy
My heart, may have been moved like me to think.
Ah! not like me who walk in the world's ways,

On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice of One Crying amid the wilderness*, and given,
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs and flowers
Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,
That awful name to thee, thee, simple Cuckoo,
Wandering in solitude, and evermore
Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leave
This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies
To carry thy glad tidings over heights
Still loftier, and to climes more near the Pole.

Voice of the desert, fare thee well; sweet Bird!
If that substantial title please thee more,
Farewell! — but go thy way; no need hast thou
Of a good wish sent after thee; from bower
To bower as green, from sky to sky as clear,
Thee gentle breezes waft, — or airs that meet
Thy course and sport around thee softly fan, —
Till Night, descending upon hill and vale,
Grants to thy mission a brief term of silence,
And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

XV.

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came bereft,
And seeking consolation from above;

Nor grieve the less that skill to him was left
To paint this picture of his lady-love:
Can she, a blessed saint, the work approve?
And O good Brethren of the cowl! a thing
So fair, to which with peril he must cling,
Destroy in pity, or with care remove.
That bloom, — those eyes, — can they assist to bind
Thoughts that would stray from Heaven? The dream must cease
To be; by Faith, not sight, his soul must live;
Else will the enamored Monk too surely find
How wide a space can part from inward peace
The most profound repose his cell can give.

XVI.

CONTINUED.

The world forsaken, all its busy cares
And stirring interests shunned with desperate flight.
All trust abandoned in the healing might
Of virtuous action, — all that courage dares,
Labor accomplishes, or patience bears, —
Those helps rejected, they whose minds perceive
How subtly works man's weakness, sighs may heave
For such a one beset with cloistral snares.
Father of Mercy! rectify his view,
If with his vows this object ill agree;

Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue
Imperious passion in a heart set free : —
That earthly love may to herself be true,
Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee.*

XVII.

AT THE EREMITE OR UPPER CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

WHAT aim had they, the pair of Monks, in size
Enormous, dragged, while side by side they sat,
By panting steers up to this convent gate ?
How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered eyes,
Dare they confront the lean austerities
Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu wait
In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate
Through all that humbles flesh and mortifies ?
Strange contrast ! — verily the world of dreams,
Where mingle, as for mockery combined,
Things in their very essences at strife,
Shows not a sight incongruous as the extremes
That everywhere, before the thoughtful mind,
Meet on the solid ground of waking life.*

* See Note.

XVIII.

AT VALLOMBROSA.

> Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
> In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades
> High over-arched embower.*
>
> PARADISE LOST.

"VALLOMBROSA, — I longed in thy shadiest wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor!"
Fond wish that was granted at last, and the Flood,
That lulled me asleep, bids me listen once more.
Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the steep,
Near that Cell — yon sequestered Retreat high in air —
Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils to keep
For converse with God, sought through study and prayer.

The Monks still repeat the tradition with pride,
And its truth who shall doubt? for his Spirit is here;
In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her grandeur abide,
In the pines pointing heavenward her beauty austere;
In the flower-besprent meadows his genius we trace
Turned to humbler delights, in which youth might confide,

* See for the two *first lines*, "Stanzas composed in the Simplon Pass."

That would yield him fit help while prefiguring
that Place
Where, if Sin had not entered, Love never had
died.

When with life lengthened out came a desolate
time,
And darkness and danger had compassed him round,
With a thought he would flee to these haunts of
his prime,
And here once again a kind shelter be found.
And let me believe that when nightly the Muse
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,
Here also, on some favored height, he would choose
To wander, and drink inspiration at will.

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in the page
Of that holiest of Bards, and the name for my mind
Had a musical charm, which the winter of age
And the changes it brings had no power to unbind.
And now, ye Miltonian shades! under you
I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy to part,
While your leaves I behold and the brooks they
will strew,
And the realized vision is clasped to my heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we may
In Forms that must perish, frail objects of sense;
Unblamed, if the Soul be intent on the day
When the Being of Beings shall summon her hence.

For he and he only with wisdom is blest
Who, gathering true pleasures wherever they grow
Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,
To the Fountain whence Time and Eternity flow

XIX.

AT FLORENCE.

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,
The Dome of Florence, pensive and alone,
Nor giving heed to aught that passed the while,
I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,
The laurelled Dante's favorite seat. A throne,
In just esteem, it rivals; though no style
Be there of decoration to beguile
The mind, depressed by thought of greatness flown.
As a true man, who long had served the lyre,
I gazed with earnestness, and dared no more.
But in his breast the mighty Poet bore
A Patriot's heart, warm with undying fire.
Bold with the thought, in reverence I sat down,
And, for a moment, filled that empty Throne.

XX.

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE BAPTIST, BY RAPHAEL, IN THE GALLERY AT FLORENCE.

THE Baptist might have been ordained to cry
Forth from the towers of that huge Pile, wherein

His father served Jehovah; but how win
Due audience, how for aught but scorn defy
The obstinate pride and wanton revelry
Of the Jerusalem below, her sin
And folly, if they with united din
Drown not at once mandate and prophecy?
Therefore the Voice spake from the Desert, thence
To her, as to her opposite in peace,
Silence, and holiness, and innocence,
To her and to all lands its warning sent,
Crying with earnestness that might not cease,
"Make straight a highway for the Lord, — repent!"

XXI.

AT FLORENCE. — FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

Rapt above earth by power of one fair face,
Hers in whose sway alone my heart delights,
I mingle with the blest on those pure heights
Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a place.
With Him who made the Work that Work accords
So well, that by its help and through his grace
I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and words,
Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.
Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot turn,
I feel how in their presence doth abide
Light which to God is both the way and guide,
And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,
My noble fire emits the joyful ray
That through the realms of glory shines for aye.

XXII.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

Eternal Lord! eased of a cumbrous load,
And loosened from the world, I turn to thee;
Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm, and flee
To thy protection for a safe abode.
The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon the tree,
The meek, benign, and lacerated face,
To a sincere repentance promise grace,
To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.
With justice mark not Thou, O Light divine,
My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear;
Neither put forth that way thy arm severe;
Wash with thy blood my sins; thereto incline
More readily the more my years require
Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

XXIII.

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT IN THE APENNINES.

Ye Trees! whose slender roots entwine
Altars that piety neglects;
Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine
Which no devotion now respects;

If not a straggler from the herd
Here ruminate, nor shrouded bird,
Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride
In aught that ye would grace or hide, —
How sadly is your love misplaced,
Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste!
Ye, too. wild Flowers! that no one heeds,
And ye — full often spurned as weeds, —
In beauty clothed, or breathing sweetness
From fractured arch and mouldering wall —
Do but more touchingly recall
Man's headstrong violence and Time's fleetness,
Making the precincts ye adorn
Appear to sight still more forlorn.

XXIV.

IN LOMBARDY.

See, where his difficult way that Old Man wins,
Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves! — most hard
Appears *his* lot, to the small Worm's compared,
For whom his toil with early day begins.
Acknowledging no task-master, at will
(As if her labor and her ease were twins)
She seems to work, at pleasure to lie still; —
And softly sleeps within the thread she spins.
So fare they, — the Man serving as her Slave.
Erelong their fates do each to each conform:

Both pass into new being; — but the Worm,
Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave;
His volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend
To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

XXV.

AFTER LEAVING ITALY.

FAIR Land! Thee all men greet with joy; how few,
Whose souls take pride in freedom, virtue, fame,
Part from thee without pity dyed in shame:
I could not, — while from Venice we withdrew,
Led on till an Alpine strait confined our view
Within its depths, and to the shore we came
Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,
Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder coloring threw.
Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,
(Too aptly emblemed by that torpid lake,)
Shall a few partial breezes only creep? —
Be its depths quickened; what thou dost inherit
Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil; awake,
Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like sleep!

XXVI.

CONTINUED.

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue
Spake bitter words; words that did ill agree
With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,

And divine Art, that fast to memory clung, —
Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young
In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight
How beautiful! how worthy to be sung
In strains of rapture, or subdued delight!
I feign not; witness that unwelcome shock
That followed the first sound of German speech,
Caught the far-winding barrier Alps among.
In that announcement, greeting seemed to mock
Parting; the casual word had power to reach
My heart, and filled that heart with conflict strong.

XXVII.

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING, 1838.

If with old love of you, dear Hills! I share
New love of many a rival image brought
From far, forgive the wanderings of my thought:
Nor art thou wronged, sweet May! when I compare
Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so fair,
So rich to me in favors. For my lot
Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot
To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air
Mingling with thy soft breath! That morning, too,
Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming
Amid the sunny, shadowy Coliseum;
Heard them, unchecked by aught of saddening hue,
For victories there won by flower-crowned Spring,
Chant in full choir their innocent Te Deum.

XXVIII.

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

WHERE towers are crushed, and unforbidden weeds
O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds:
And temples, doomed to milder change, unfold
A new magnificence that vies with old;
Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood
A votive Column, spared by fire and flood: —
And, though the passions of man's fretful race
Have never ceased to eddy round its base,
Not injured more by touch of meddling hands
Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands,
Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save
From death the memory of the good and brave.
Historic figures round the shaft embost
Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost:
Still as he turns, the charmed spectator sees
Group winding after group, with dream-like ease
Triumphs in sun-bright gratitude displayed,
Or softly stealing into modest shade.
— So, pleased with purple clusters to entwine
Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring vine;
The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and breathes
Wide-spreading odors from her flowery wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds' ears
Murmuring but one smooth story for all years,
I gladly commune with the mind and heart

Of him who thus survives by classic art,
His actions witness, venerate his mien,
And study Trajan as by Pliny seen;
Behold how fought the Chief whose conquering sword
Stretched far as earth might own a single lord;
In the delight of moral prudence schooled,
How feelingly at home the sovereign ruled;
Best of the good, — in pagan faith allied
To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar! mid the wrecks of Time
Preserve thy charge with confidence sublime, —
The exultations, pomps, and cares of Rome,
Whence half the breathing world received its doom;
Things that recoil from language; that, if shown
By apter pencil, from the light had flown.
A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian shores;
Lo! he harangues his cohorts, — *there* the storm
Of battle meets him in authentic form!
Unharnessed, naked troops of Moorish horse
Sweep to the charge; more high, the Dacian force,
To hoof and finger mailed; — yet, high or low,
None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe;
In every Roman, through all turns of fate,
Is Roman dignity inviolate;
Spirit in him preëminent, who guides,
Supports, adorns, and over all presides;
Distinguished only by inherent state

From honored Instruments that round him wait
Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test
Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest
On aught by which another is deprest.
— Alas! that One thus disciplined could toil
To enslave whole nations on their native soil;
So emulous of Macedonian fame,
That, when his age was measured with his aim,
He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,
And turned his eagles back with deep-drawn sighs.
O weakness of the Great! O folly of the wise!

Where now the haughty Empire that was spread
With such fond hope? her very speech is dead;
Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,
And Trajan still, through various enterprise,
Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies:
Still are we present with the imperial Chief,
Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief,
Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind

THE EGYPTIAN MAID:

OR, THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER-LILY.

[For the names and persons in the following poem, see the "History of the Renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table"; for the rest, the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.]

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish sands,
Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scilly,
The pleased Enchanter was aware
Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in air;
Yet was she work of mortal hands,
And took from men her name, — THE WATER-LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew;
And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill ascendant,
Grows from a little edge of light
To a full orb, this Pinnace bright

Became, as nearer to the coast she drew,
More glorious, with spread sail and streaming pendant.

Upon this wingèd Shape so fair
Sage Merlin gazed with admiration:
Her lineaments, thought he, surpass
Aught that was ever shown in magic glass;
Was ever built with patient care;
Or, at a touch, produced by happiest transformation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill
Shames the degenerate grasp of modern science
Grave Merlin (and belike the more
For practising occult and perilous lore)
Was subject to a freakish will
That sapped good thoughts, or scared them with defiance.

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast
An altered look upon the advancing Stranger
Whom he had hailed with joy, and cried,
"My Art shall help to tame her pride." —
Anon the breeze became a blast,
And the waves rose, and sky portended danger

With thrilling word, and potent sign
Traced on the beach, his work the Sorcerer urges
The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,
Like spiteful Fiends that vanish. crossed

By Fiends of aspect more malign;
And the winds roused the Deep with fiercer
scourges.

But worthy of the name she bore
Was this Sea-flower, this buoyant Galley;
Supreme in loveliness and grace
Of motion, whether in the embrace
Of trusty anchorage, or scudding o'er
The main flood roughened into hill and valley

Behold, how wantonly she laves
Her sides, the Wizard's craft confounding;
Like something out of Ocean sprung
To be for ever fresh and young,
Breasts the sea-flashes, and huge waves
Top-gallant high, rebounding and rebounding!

But Ocean under magic heaves,
And cannot spare the Thing he cherished:
Ah! what avails that she was fair,
Luminous, blithe, and debonair?
The storm has stripped her of her leaves;
The Lily floats no longer! — She hath perished.

Grieve for her, she deserves no less;
So like, yet so unlike, a living Creature!
No heart had she, no busy brain;
Though loved, she could not love again;
Though pitied, *feel* her own distress;
Nor aught that troubles us, the fools of Nature.

Yet is there cause for gushing tears;
So richly was this Galley laden,
A fairer than herself she bore,
And, in her struggles, cast ashore;
A lovely One, who nothing hears
Of wind or wave, — a meek and guileless Maiden.

Into a cave had Merlin fled,
From mischief caused by spells himself had muttered;
And while, repentant all too late,
In moody posture there he sate,
He heard a voice, and saw, with half-raised head,
A Visitant by whom these words were uttered: —

"On Christian service this frail Bark
Sailed, (hear me, Merlin!) under high protection,
Though on her brow a sign of heathen power
Was carved, — a Goddess with a Lily flower,
The old Egyptian's emblematic mark
Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

"Her course was for the British strand;
Her freight, it was a Damsel peerless;
God reigns above, and Spirits strong
May gather to avenge this wrong
Done to the Princess, and her Land
Which she in duty left, sad but not cheerless.

"And to Caerleon's loftiest tower
Soon will the Knights of Arthur's Table
A cry of lamentation send;
And all will weep who there attend,
To grace that Stranger's bridal hour,
For whom the sea was made unnavigable.

"Shame! should a Child of royal line
Die through the blindness of thy malice?"
Thus to the Necromancer spake
Nina, the Lady of the Lake,
A gentle Sorceress, and benign,
Who ne'er embittered any good man's chalice.

"What boots," continued she, "to mourn?
To expiate thy sin endeavor:
From the bleak isle where she is laid,
Fetched by our art, the Egyptian Maid
May yet to Arthur's court be borne,
Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

"My pearly Boat, a shining Light,
That brought me down that sunless river
Will bear me on from wave to wave,
And back with her to this sea-cave;—
Then, Merlin! for a rapid flight
Through air, to thee my Charge will I deliver.

"The very swiftest of thy cars
Must, when my part is done, be ready;

Meanwhile, for further guidance, look
Into thy own prophetic book;
And, if that fail, consult the Stars
To learn thy course. Farewell! be prompt and steady."

This scarcely spoken, she again
Was seated in her gleaming shallop,
That, o'er the yet-distempered Deep,
Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,
Or like a steed, without a rein,
Urged o'er the wilderness in sportive gallop.

Soon did the gentle Nina reach
That Isle without a house or haven;
Landing, she found not what she sought,
Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught
But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach
By the fierce waves, a flower in marble graven.

Sad relic, but how fair the while!
For gently each from each retreating
With backward curve, the leaves revealed
The bosom half, and half concealed,
Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile
On Nina, as she passed, with hopeful greeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,
Of tortured hope and purpose shaken;
Following the margin of a bay,

She spied the lonely Cast-away,
Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,
But with closed eyes, — of breath and bloom forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,
With tenderness and mild emotion,
The Damsel, in that trance embound;
And, while she raised her from the ground,
And in the pearly shallop placed,
Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs
Of music opened, and there came a blending
Of fragrance, underived from earth,
With gleams that owed not to the sun their birth,
And that soft rustling of invisible wings
Which Angels make, on works of love descending.

And Nina heard a sweeter voice
Than if the Goddess of the flower had spoken:
"Thou hast achieved, fair Dame! what none
Less pure in spirit could have done;
Go, in thy enterprise rejoice!
Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven, success betoken."

So cheered, she left that Island bleak,
A bare rock of the Scilly cluster;
And, as they traversed the smooth brine,
The self-illumined Brigantine

Shed, on the Slumberer's cold, wan cheek
And pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when they came
To the dim cavern, whence the river
Issued into the salt-sea flood,
Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,
Was thus accosted by the Dame:
"Behold, to thee my Charge I now deliver!

"But where attends thy chariot, — where?" —
Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden,
So have I done; as trusty as thy barge
My vehicle shall prove, — O precious Charge!
If this be sleep, how soft! if death, how fair!
Much have my books disclosed, but the end is hidden."

He spake; and gliding into view
Forth from the grotto's dimmest chamber
Came two mute Swans, whose plumes of dusky white
Changed, as the pair approached the light,
Drawing an ebon car, their hue
(Like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift
The Princess, passive to all changes:
The car received her: — then up-went
Into the ethereal element

The Birds, with progress smooth and swift
As thought, when through bright regions memory
ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,
Instructs the Swans their way to measure;
And soon Caerleon's towers appeared,
And notes of minstrelsy were heard
From rich pavilions spreading wide,
For some high day of long-expected pleasure.

Awe-stricken stood both Knights and Dames,
Ere on firm ground the car alighted;
Eftsoons astonishment was past,
For in that face they saw the last,
Last lingering look of clay, that tames
All pride; by which all happiness is blighted!

Said Merlin, "Mighty King, fair Lords,
Away with feast and tilt and tourney!
Ye saw, throughout this royal House,
Ye heard, a rocking marvellous
Of turrets, and a clash of swords
Self-shaken, as I closed my airy journey.

"Lo! by a destiny well known
To mortals, joy is turned to sorrow;
This is the wished-for Bride, the Maid
Of Egypt, from a rock conveyed
Where she by shipwreck had been thrown;
Ill sight! but grief may vanish ere the morrow."

"Though vast thy power, thy words are weak,"
Exclaimed the King, "a mockery hateful;
Dutiful Child, her lot how hard!
Is this her piety's reward?
Those watery locks, that bloodless cheek!
O winds without remorse! O shore ungrateful!

"Rich robes are fretted by the moth;
Towers, temples, fall by stroke of thunder;
Will that, or deeper thoughts, abate
A Father's sorrow for her fate?
He will repent him of his troth;
His brain will burn, his stout heart split asunder.

"Alas! and I have caused this woe;
For, when my prowess from invading Neighbors
Had freed his Realm, he plighted word
That he would turn to Christ our Lord,
And his dear Daughter on a Knight bestow
Whom I should choose for love and matchless labors.

"Her birth was heathen; but a fence
Of holy Angels round her hovered:
A Lady added to my court
So fair, of such divine report
And worship, seemed a recompense
For fifty kingdoms by my sword recovered.

"Ask not for whom, O Champions true!
She was reserved by me, her life's betrayer;

She who was meant to be a bride
Is now a corse: then put aside
Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with observance due
Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to lay her."

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not close
Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;
Not froward to thy sovereign will
Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill
Wafted her hither, interpose
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

"My books command me to lay bare
The secret thou art bent on keeping:
Here must a high attest be given,
What Bridegroom was for her ordained by Heaven:
And in my glass significants there are
Of things that may to gladness turn this weeping.

"For this, approaching one by one,
Thy Knights must touch the cold hand of the Virgin;
So, for the favored one, the Flower may bloom
Once more: but, if unchangeable her doom,
If life departed be for ever gone,
Some blest assurance, from this cloud emerging,

"May teach him to bewail his loss,
Not with a grief that, like a vapor, rises

And melts, but grief devout that shall endure,
And a perpetual growth secure
Of purposes which no false thought shall cross,
A harvest of high hopes and noble enterprises."

"So be it," said the King; — "anon,
Here, where the Princess lies, begin the trial;
Knights, each in order as ye stand,
Step forth." — To touch the pallid hand
Sir Agravaine advanced; no sign he won
From Heaven or earth; — Sir Kaye had like denial.

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away;
Even for Sir Percival was no disclosure;
Though he, devoutest of all Champions, ere
He reached that ebon car, the bier
Whereon diffused like snow the Damsel lay,
Full thrice had crossed himself in meek composure.

Imagine (but ye Saints! who can?)
How in still air the balance trembled, —
The wishes, peradventure the despites
That overcame some not ungenerous Knights;
And all the thoughts that lengthened out a span
Of time to Lords and Ladies thus assembled.

What patient confidence was here!
And there how many bosoms panted!
While drawing toward the car Sir Gawaine
mailed

For tournament, his beaver vailed,
And softly touched; but, to his princely cheer
And high expectancy, no sign was granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a brother,
Came to the proof, nor grieved that there ensued
No change; — the fair Izonda he had wooed
With love too true, a love with pangs too sharp,
From hope too distant, not to dread another.

Not so Sir Launcelot; — from Heaven's grace
A sign he craved, tired slave of vain contrition;
The royal Guinever looked passing glad
When his touch failed. — Next came Sir Galahad;
He paused, and stood entranced by that still face,
Whose features he had seen in noontide vision.

For late, as near a murmuring stream
He rested, 'mid an arbor green and shady,
Nina, the good Enchantress, shed
A light around his mossy bed;
And, at her call, a waking dream
Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian Lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he bowed,
And stood, fac-kenned by mantle furred with ermine,
As o'er the insensate Body hung

The enrapt, the beautiful, the young,
Belief sank deep into the crowd
That he the solemn issue would determine.

Nor deem it strange; the Youth had worn
That very mantle on a day of glory,
The day when he achieved that matchless feat,
The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,
Which whosoe'er approached of strength was shorn,
Though King or Knight the most renowned in story.

He touched with hesitating hand, —
And lo! those Birds, far-famed through Love's dominions,
The Swans, in triumph clap their wings;
And their necks play, involved in rings,
Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy land.
"Mine is she," cried the Knight; — again they clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she, — mine she is, though dead,
And to her name my soul shall cleave in sorrow.
Whereat, a tender twilight streak
Of color dawned upon the Damsel's cheek;
And her lips, quickening with uncertain red,
Seemed from each other a faint warmth to borrow

Deep was the awe, the rapture high,
Of love emboldened, hope with dread entwining

When to the mouth relenting Death
Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,
Precursor to a timid sigh,
To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.

In silence did King Arthur gaze
Upon the signs that pass away or tarry;
In silence watched the gentle strife
Of Nature leading back to life;
Then eased his soul at length by praise
Of God, and Heaven's pure Queen, — the blissful Mary.

Then said he, "Take her to thy heart,
Sir Galahad! a treasure that God giveth,
Bound by indissoluble ties to thee
Through mortal change and immortality,
Be happy and unenvied, thou who art
A goodly Knight that hath no peer that liveth!"

Not long the Nuptials were delayed;
And sage tradition still rehearses
The pomp, the glory of that hour,
When toward the altar from her bower
King Arthur led the Egyptian Maid,
And Angels carolled these far-echoed verses: —

Who shrinks not from alliance
Of evil with good Powers,

To God proclaims defiance,
And mocks whom he adores.

A Ship to Christ devoted
From the Land of Nile did go;
Alas! the bright Ship floated,
An Idol at her prow.

By magic domination,
The Heaven-permitted vent
Of purblind mortal passion,
Was wrought her punishment.

The Flower, the Form within it,
What served they in her need?
Her port she could not win it,
Nor from mishap be freed.

The tempest overcame her,
And she was seen no more;
But gently, gently blame her, —
She cast a Pearl ashore.

The Maid to Jesu hearkened,
And kept to him her faith,
Till sense in death was darkened,
Or sleep akin to death.

But Angels round her pillow
Kept watch a viewless band;

And, billow favoring billow,
She reached the destined strand.

Blest Pair! whate'er befall you
Your faith in Him approve
Who from frail earth can call you
To bowers of endless love!,

1830

THE RIVER DUDDON.

A SERIES OF SONNETS.

The River Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH.

WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION, 1820.)

The Minstrels played their Christmas tune
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;
While, smitten by a lofty moon,
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
Had sunk to rest, with folded wings:
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,
Nor check, the music of the strings;
So stout and hardy were the band
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand!

And who but listened? — till was paid
Respect to every Inmate's claim:
The greeting given, the music played,
In honor of each household name,
Duly pronounced with lusty call,
And "Merry Christmas" wished to all!

O Brother! I revere the choice
That took thee from thy native hills:
And it is given thee to rejoice:
Though public care full often tills
(Heaven only witness of the toil)
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that thou, with me and mine,
Hadst heard this never-failing rite;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours!

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds;
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear — and sink again to sleep!
Or, at an earlier call, to mark,
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence; —

The mutual nod, — the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more;

Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright
Than fabled Cytherea's zone
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws;
Remnants of love whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws:
Hail, Usages of pristine mould!
And ye that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought
That slights this passion, or condemns;
If thee fond Fancy ever brought
From the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers,
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
Short leisure even in busiest days;
Moments. to cast a look behind,
And profit by those kindly rays
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,
A pleased attention I may win
To agitations less severe,
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

I.

Not envying Latian shades, — if yet they throw
A grateful coolness round that crystal Spring,
Blandusia, prattling as when long ago
The Sabine Bard was moved her praise to sing;
Careless of flowers that in perennial blow
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains cling;
Heedless of Alpine torrents thundering
Through ice-built arches radiant as heaven's bow;
I seek the birthplace of a native Stream. —
All hail, ye mountains! hail, thou morning light!
Better to breathe at large on this clear height,
Than toil in heedless sleep from dream to dream:
Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free, and bright,
For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my theme!

II.

Child of the clouds! remote from every taint
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;
Thine are the honors of the lofty waste;
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys faint,
Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue quaint
Thy cradle decks; — to chant thy birth, thou hast
No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint!
She guards thee, ruthless Power! who would not
spare

Those mighty forests, once the bison's screen,
Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy lair,*
Through paths and alleys roofed with darkest green,
Thousands of years before the silent air
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter keen!

III.

How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone
My seat, while I give way to such intent,
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monument,
Make to the eyes of men thy features known.
But as of all those tripping lambs not one
Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent
To thy beginning naught that doth present
Peculiar ground for hope to build upon.
To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's care;
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a gleam
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness rare;
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother, Earth!

IV.

Take, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take
This parting glance, no negligent adieu!

* The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct.

A Protean change seems wrought while I pursue
The curves, a loosely scattered chain doth make;
Or rather thou appear'st a glittering snake,
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,
Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes, through
Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted Rill
Robed instantly in garb of snow-white foam;
And laughing dares the Adventurer, who hath clomb
So high, a rival purpose to fulfil;
Else let the dastard backward wend, and roam,
Seeking less bold achievement, where he will!

V.

Sole listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played
With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound
Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound, —
Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
The sun in heaven! — but now, to form a shade
For thee, green alders have together wound
Their foliage; ashes flung their arms around;
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
And thou hast also tempted here to rise,
'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude and gray;
Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes
Carelessly watched, sport through the summer day,
Thy pleased associates: — light as endless May
On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

VI.

FLOWERS.

Ere yet our course was graced with social trees,
It lacked not old remains of hawthorn bowers,
Where small birds warbled to their paramours;
And earlier still was heard the hum of bees;
I saw them ply their harmless robberies,
And caught the fragrance which the sundry flowers
Fed by the stream with soft, perpetual showers,
Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.
There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness;
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue,
The thyme her purple, like blush of Even;
And if the breath of some to no caress
Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,
All kinds alike seemed favorites of Heaven.

VII.

"Change me, some God, into that breathing rose!"
The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,
The envied flower beholding, as it lies
On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose;
Or he would pass into her bird, that throws
The darts of song from out its wiry cage;
Enraptured, — could he for himself engage
The thousandth part of what the Nymph bestows

And what the little careless innocent
Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice
There are whose calmer mind it would content
To be an unculled floweret of the glen,
Fearless of plough and scythe; or darkling wren
That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender voice.

VIII.

What aspect bore the Man who roved or fled,
First of his tribe, to this dark dell, — who first
In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst?
What hopes came with him? what designs were spread
Along his path? His unprotected bed
What dreams encompassed? Was the intruder nursed
In hideous usages, and rites accursed,
That thinned the living and disturbed the dead?
No voice replies; — both air and earth are mute;
And thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring yield'st no more
Than a soft record, that, whatever fruit
Of ignorance thou mightst witness heretofore,
Thy function was to heal and to restore,
To soothe and cleanse, not madden and pollute!

IX.

THE STEPPING-STONES.

THE struggling rill insensibly is grown
Into a brook of loud and stately march,
Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch;
And, for like use, lo! what might seem a zone
Chosen for ornament, — stone matched with stone
In studied symmetry, with interspace
For the clear waters to pursue their race
Without restraint. How swiftly have they flown.
Succeeding, — still succeeding! Here the Child
Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce and wild,
His budding courage to the proof; and here
Declining Manhood learns to note the sly
And sure encroachments of infirmity,
Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how near

X.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

NOT so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance
With prompt emotion, urging them to pass;
A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-lass;
Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance;
To stop ashamed, — too timid to advance;
She ventures once again, — another pause!

His outstretched hand he tauntingly withdraws,—
She sues for help with piteous utterance!
Chidden she chides again; the thrilling touch
Both feel, when he renews the wished-for aid:
Ah! if their fluttering hearts should stir too much,
Should beat too strongly, both may be betrayed.
The frolic Loves, who, from yon high rock, see
The struggle, clap their wings for victory!

XI.

THE FAERY CHASM.

No fiction was it of the antique age:
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,
Is of the very foot-marks unbereft
Which tiny Elves impressed; — on that smooth stage
Dancing with all their brilliant equipage
In secret revels, — haply after theft
Of some sweet babe, — Flower stolen, and coarse Weed left
For the distracted mother to assuage
Her grief with, as she might! - - But where, O, where
Is traceable a vestige of the notes
That ruled those dances wild in character? —
Deep underground? Or in the upper air,
On the shrill wind of midnight? or where floats
O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer?

XII.

HINTS FOR THE FANCY.

On, loitering Muse! — the swift Stream chides us
— on!
Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immure
Objects immense portrayed in miniature,
Wild shapes for many a strange comparison!
Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon
Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to endure
When the broad oak drops, a leafless skeleton,
And the solidities of mortal pride,
Palace and tower, are crumbled into dust! —
The Bard who walks with Duddon for his guide
Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set:
Turn from the sight, enamored Muse, — we must
And, if thou canst, leave them without regret!

XIII.

OPEN PROSPECT.

Hail to the fields, — with dwellings sprinkled o'er,
And one small hamlet, under a green hill
Clustering, with barn and byre, and spouting mill
A glance suffices; — should we wish for more,
Gay June would scorn us. But when bleak winds
roar

Through the stiff, lance-like shoots of pollard ash,
Dread swell of sound! loud as the gusts that lash
The matted forests of Ontario's shore
By wasteful steel unsmitten, — then would I
Turn into port; and, reckless of the gale,
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling ale,
Laugh with the generous household heartily
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

XIV.

O MOUNTAIN Stream! the Shepherd and his Cot
Are privileged inmates of deep solitude;
Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude
A field or two of brighter green, or plot
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
Of stationary sunshine: — thou hast viewed
These only, Duddon! with their paths renewed
By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to leave,
Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
Though simple thy companions were and few;
And through this wilderness a passage cleave,
Attended but by thy own voice, save when
The clouds and fowls of the air thy way pursue!

XV.

From this deep chasm, where quivering sunbeams play
Upon its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold
A gloomy NICHE, capacious, blank, and cold;
A concave free from shrubs and mosses gray;
In semblance fresh, as if, with dire affray,
Some Statue, placed amid these regions old
For tutelary service, thence had rolled,
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday!
Was it by mortals sculptured? — weary slaves
Of slow endeavor! or abruptly cast
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast
Tempestuously let loose from central caves?
Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,
Then when o'er highest hills the Deluge passed?

XVI.

AMERICAN TRADITION.

Such fruitless questions may not long beguile
Or plague the fancy 'mid the sculptured shows
Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows:
There would the Indian answer with a smile
Aimed at the White Man's ignorance the while
Of the GREAT WATERS telling how they rose,
Covered the plains, and wandering where they chose.

Mounted through every intricate defile,
Triumphant. — Inundation wide and deep,
O'er which his fathers urged, to ridge and steep
Else unapproachable, their buoyant way;
And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded side,
Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase or prey;
Whate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or deified!*

XVII.

RETURN.

A DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted yew,
Perched on whose top the Danish Raven croaks;
Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes
Departed ages, shedding where he flew
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that bestrew
The clouds and thrill the chambers of the rocks,
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,
That, calmly couching while the nightly dew
Moistened each fleece, beneath the twinkling stars
Slept amid that lone camp on Hardknot's height,†
Whose guardians bent the knee to Jove and Mars:
Or, near that mystic Round of Druid frame
Tardily sinking by its proper weight
Deep into patient Earth, from whose smooth breast
it came!

* See Humboldt's Personal Narrative. † See Note.

XVIII.

RRATHWAITE CHAPEL.

Sacred Religion! "mother of form and fear,"
Dread arbitress of mutable respect,
New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;
Mother of Love! (that name best suits thee here,)
Mother of Love! for this deep vale, protect
Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
Gifted to purge the vapory atmosphere
That seeks to stifle it;—as in those days
When this low Pile * a Gospel teacher knew,
Whose good works formed an endless retinue:
A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;
Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew;
And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless
praise!

XIX.

TRIBUTARY STREAM.

My frame hath often trembled with delight
When hope presented some far-distant good,
That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood
Of yon pure waters, from their aëry height

* See Note.

Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite;
Who, 'mid a world of images imprest
On the calm depth of his transparent breast,
Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,
The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all!
And seldom hath ear listened to a tune
More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,
Swoln by that voice, — whose murmur musical
Announces to the thirsty fields a boon
Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fall.

XX.

THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE.

The old inventive Poets, had they seen,
Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains
Thy waters, Duddon! 'mid these flowery plains,—
The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,
Transferred to bowers imperishably green, —
Had beautified Elysium! But these chains
Will soon be broken; — a rough course remains,
Rough as the past; where thou, of placid mien,
Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,
And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky,
Shalt change thy temper; and, with many a shock
Given and received in mutual jeopardy,
Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high!

XXI.

WHENCE that low voice? — A whisper from the heart,
That told of days long past, when here I roved
With friends and kindred tenderly beloved;
Some who had early mandates to depart,
Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart
By Duddon's side; once more do we unite,
Once more beneath the kind Earth's tranquil light
And smothered joys into new being start.
From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall
Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory;
Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and free
As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall
On gales that breathe too gently to recall
Aught of the fading year's inclemency!

XXII.

TRADITION.

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant time,
Came to this hidden pool, whose depths surpass
In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;
And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from the prime
Derives its name, reflected as the chime
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound:
The starry treasure from the blue profound

She longed to ravish ; — shall she plunge, or climb
The humid precipice, and seize the guest
Of April, smiling high in upper air?
Desperate alternative ! what fiend could dare
To prompt the thought? — Upon the steep rock's
breast
The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,
Untouched memento of her hapless doom !

XXIII.

SHEEP-WASHING.

SAD thoughts, avaunt ! — partake we their blithe
cheer
Who gathered in betimes the unshorn flock
To wash the fleece, where haply bands of rock,
Checking the stream, make a pool smooth and clear
As this we look on. Distant Mountains hear,
Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites
Clamor of boys with innocent despites
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange fear.
And what if Duddon's spotless flood receive
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive
Such wrong ; nor need *we* blame the licensed joys,
Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise :
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

XXIV.

THE RESTING-PLACE.

MID-NOON is past; — upon the sultry mead
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow throws:
If we advance unstrengthened by repose,
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed!
This Nook — with woodbine hung and straggling weed,
Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,
Half grot, half arbor — proffers to inclose
Body and mind, from molestation freed,
In narrow compass, — narrow as itself:
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,
Be loth that we should breathe awhile exempt
From new incitements friendly to our task,
Here wants not stealthy prospect, that may tempt
Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

XXV.

METHINKS 't were no unprecedented feat
Should some benignant minister of air
Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,
The one for whom my heart shall ever beat
With tenderest love; — or, if a safer seat
Atween his downy wings be furnished, there
Would lodge her, and the cherished burden bear
O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat!
Rough ways my steps have trod; — too rough and long

For her companionship ; here dwells soft ease :
With sweets that she partakes not some distaste
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of wrong ;
Languish the flowers ; the waters seem to waste
Their vocal charm ; their sparklings cease to please.

XXVI.

Return, Content ! for fondly I pursued,
Even when a child, the Streams, — unheard, unseen ;
Through tangled woods, impending rocks between ;
Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood —
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green —
Poured down the hills, a choral multitude !
Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains ;
They taught me random cares and truant joys,
That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys ;
Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

XXVII.

Fallen, and diffused into a shapeless heap,
Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,

Is that embattled House, whose massy Keep
Flung from yon cliff a shadow large and cold.
There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the bold;
Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep
Of winds, — though winds were silent, — struck a deep
And lasting terror through that ancient Hold.
Its line of Warriors fled; — they shrunk when tried
By ghostly power: — but Time's unsparing hand
Hath plucked such foes, like weeds, from out the land;
And now, if men with men in peace abide,
All other strength the weakest may withstand,
All worse assaults may safely be defied.

XXVIII.

JOURNEY RENEWED.

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-oppressed,
Crowded together under rustling trees
Brushed by the current of the water-breeze;
And for *their* sakes, and love of all that rest,
On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering nest;
For all the startled scaly tribes that slink
Into his coverts, and each fearless link
Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;
For these, and hopes and recollections worn
Close to the vital seat of human clay, —
Glad meetings, tender partings, that upstay

The drooping mind of absence, by vows sworn
In his pure presence near the trysting-thorn,—
thanked the Leader of my onward way.

XXIX.

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,
Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired domains
Tells that their turf drank purple from the veins
Of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance,
Till doubtful combat issued in a trance
Of victory, that struck through heart and reins
Even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,
And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.
Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie
In the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,
The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;
The Torrents chant their praise, inspiring scorn
Of power usurped; with proclamation high,
And glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

XXX.

Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce
Of that serene companion, a good name,
Recovers not his loss; but walks with shame,
With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse:
And ofttimes he, who, yielding to the force

Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,
From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend,
In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.
Not so with such as loosely wear the chain
That binds them, pleasant river! to thy side:—
Through the rough copse wheel thou with hasty stride;
I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,
Sure, when the separation has been tried,
That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

XXXI.

The Kirk of Ulpha to the pilgrim's eye
Is welcome as a star, that doth present
Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent
Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky;
Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high
O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's tent;
Or the Indian tree whose branches, downward bent,
Take root again, a boundless canopy.
How sweet were leisure! could it yield no more
Than 'mid that wave-washed Churchyard to recline,
From pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine
Or there to pace, and mark the summits hoar
Of distant moonlit mountains faintly shine,
Soothed by the unseen River's gentle roar.

XXXII.

Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep;
Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled lands
And blooming thickets; nor by rocky bands
Held; but in radiant progress toward the Deep,
Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep
Sink, and forget their nature, — *now* expands
Majestic Duddon, over smooth, flat sands
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!
Beneath an ampler sky, a region wide
Is opened round him; — hamlets, towers, and towns,
And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar;
In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied,
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,
With commerce freighted, or triumphant war.

XXXIII.

CONCLUSION.

But here no cannon thunders to the gale;
Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast
A crimson splendor: lowly is the mast
That rises here, and humbly spread, the sail;
While, less disturbed than in the narrow Vale
Through which with strange vicissitudes he passed,
The wanderer seeks that receptacle vast
Where all his unambitious functions fail.

And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream! be free —
The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,
And each tumultuous working left behind
At seemly distance — to advance like Thee;
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind
And soul, to mingle with Eternity.

XXXIV.

AFTER-THOUGHT

I THOUGHT *of Thee, my partner and my guide,*
As being passed away. — Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish; — be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour:
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcend
ent dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.

YARROW REVISITED,

AND OTHER POEMS,

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND AND ON THE ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATIONS, THESE MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

RYDAL MOUNT, *Dec.* 11, 1834.

I.

[The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott, and other friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title *Yarrow Revisited* will stand in no need of explanation, for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream.]

THE gallant Youth, who may have gained,
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"
Was but an Infant in the lap
When first I looked on Yarrow;

Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate
Long left without a warder,
I stood, looked, listened, and with thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day
Their dignity installing
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
Were on the bough, or falling;
But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed,
The forest to embolden;
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on
In foamy agitation;
And slept in many a crystal pool
For quiet contemplation:
No public and no private care
The freeborn mind enthralling,
We made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of youth,
With freaks of graceful folly, —
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,
Her Night not melancholy;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,
Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing;
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine employment!
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons
For hope and calm enjoyment;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded;
And Care waylays their steps, — a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change
Green Eildon Hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;
And leave thy Tweed and Teviot
For mild Sorento's breezy waves;
May classic Fancy, linking
With native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking!

O, while they minister to thee,
Each vying with the other,
May Health return to mellow Age.
With Strength, her venturous brother,

And Tiber, and each brook and rill
Renowned in song and story,
With unimagined beauty shine,
Nor lose one ray of glory!

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow,
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow;
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite thee,
At parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must requite thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
Such looks of love and honor
As thy own Yarrow gave to me
When first I gazed upon her;
Beheld what I had feared to see,
Unwilling to surrender
Dreams treasured up from early days,
The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all
That mortals do or suffer,
Did no responsive harp, no pen,
Memorial tribute offer?
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?
Her features, could they win us,
Unhelped by the poetic voice
That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localized Romance
Plays false with our affections;
Unsanctifies our tears, — made sport
For fanciful dejections:
Ah, no! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feeling
Life as she is, — our changeful Life,
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, ye, whose thoughts that day
In Yarrow's groves were centred;
Who through the silent portal arch
Of mouldering Newark entered;
And clomb the winding stair that once
Too timidly was mounted
By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)
Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!
Fulfil thy pensive duty,
Well pleased that future Bards should chant
For simple hearts thy beauty;
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
Dear to the common sunshine,
And dearer still, as now I feel,
To memory's shadowy moonshine!

II.

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES.

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height:
Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
For kindred Power departing from their sight;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the might
Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope!

III.

A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND.

PART fenced by man, part by a rugged steep
That curbs a foaming brook, a Graveyard lies;
The hare's best couching-place for fearless sleep
Which moonlit elves, far seen by credulous eyes,

Enter in dance. Of church, or Sabbath ties,
No vestige now remains; yet thither creep
Bereft ones, and in lowly anguish weep
Their prayers out to the wind and naked skies
Proud tomb is none; but rudely sculptured knights,
By humble choice of plain old times, are seen
Level with earth, among the hillocks green:
Union not sad, when sunny daybreak smites
The spangled turf, and neighboring thickets ring
With *jubilate* from the choirs of spring!

IV.

ON THE SIGHT OF A MANSE IN THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND.

Say, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing hills, —
Among the happiest-looking homes of men
Scattered all Britain over, through deep glen,
On airy upland, and by forest rills,
And o'er wide plains cheered by the lark that trills
His sky-born warblings, — does aught meet your ken
More fit to animate the Poet's pen,
Aught that more surely by its aspect fills
Pure minds with sinless envy, than the Abode
Of the good Priest: who, faithful through all hours
To his high charge, and truly serving God,
Has yet a heart and hand for trees and flowers,
Enjoys the walks his predecessors trod,
Nor covets lineal rights in lands and towers.

V.

COMPOSED IN ROSLIN CHAPEL, DURING A STORM.

THE wind is now thy organist; — a clank
(We know not whence) ministers for a bell
To mark some change of service. As the swell
Of music reached its height, and even when sank
The notes, in prelude, ROSLIN! to a blank
Of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous roof,
Pillars, and arches, — not in vain time-proof,
Tho' Christian rites be wanting! From what bank
Came those live herbs? by what hand were they
sown,
Where dew falls not, where rain-drops seem un
known?
Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche
Share with their sculptured fellows, that, green
grown,
Copy their beauty more and more, and preach,
Though mute, of all things blending into one.

VI.

THE TROSACHS.

THERE 's not a nook within this solemn Pass,
But were an apt confessional for one
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
That Life is but a tale of morning grass

Withered at eve. From scenes of art which chase
That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice-happy quest,
If from a golden perch of aspen spray
(October's workmanship to rival May)
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

VII.

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute;
The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy
Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy;
The target mouldering like ungathered fruit;
The smoking steamboat eager in pursuit,
As eagerly pursued; the umbrella spread
To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's head, —
All speak of manners withering to the root,
And of old honors, too, and passions high:
Then may we ask, though pleased that thought should range
Among the conquests of civility,
Survives Imagination, to the change
Superior? Help to Virtue does she give?
If not, O Mortals, better cease to live!

VIII.

COMPOSED IN THE GLEN OF LOCH ETIVE.

"THIS Land of Rainbows spanning glens whose walls,
Rock-built, are hung with rainbow-colored mists,—
Of far-stretched Meres whose salt flood never rests,—
Of tuneful Caves and playful Waterfalls,—
Of Mountains varying momently their crests,—
Proud be this Land! whose poorest huts are halls
Where Fancy entertains becoming guests;
While native song the heroic Past recalls."
Thus, in the net of her own wishes caught,
The Muse exclaimed; but Story now must hide
Her trophies, Fancy crouch; the course of pride
Has been diverted, other lessons taught,
That make the Patriot-spirit bow her head
Where the all-conquering Roman feared to tread.

IX.

EAGLES.

Composed at Dunolly Castle in the Bay of Oban.

DISHONORED Rock and Ruin! that, by law
Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarred
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
Vexed is he, and screams loud. The last I saw
Was on the wing; stooping, he struck with awe

Man, bird, and beast; then, with a consort paired,
From a bold headland, their loved aery's guard,
Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw
Light from the fountain of the setting sun.
Such was this Prisoner once; and, when his plumes
The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,
Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes
His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live free,
His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

X.

IN THE SOUND OF MULL.

TRADITION, be thou mute! Oblivion, throw
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung
Round strath and mountain, stamped by the ancient tongue
On rock and ruin darkening as we go,—
Spots where a word, ghost-like, survives to show
What crimes from hate, or desperate love, have sprung;
From honor misconceived, or fancied wrong,
What feuds, not quenched but fed by mutual woe.
Yet, though a wild, vindictive Race, untamed
By civil arts and labors of the pen,
Could gentleness be scorned by those fierce Men,
Who, to spread wide the reverence they claimed
For patriarchal occupations, named
Yon towering Peaks, "Shepherds of Etive Glen?"*

* In Gaelic, *Buachaill Eite*

XI.

SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN A STORM.

ENOUGH of garlands, of the Arcadian crook,
And all that Greece and Italy have sung
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among!
Ours couch on naked rocks, — will cross a brook
Swoln with chill rains, nor ever cast a look
This way or that, or give it even a thought
More than by smoothest pathway may be brought
Into a vacant mind. Can written book
Teach what *they* learn? Up, hardy Mountaineer!
And guide the Bard, ambitious to be one
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art,
On cloud-sequestered heights, that see and hear
To what dread Powers He delegates his part
On earth, who works in the heaven of heavens, alone.

XII.

THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S RUINED MANSION, AND FAMILY BURIAL-PLACE, NEAR KILLIN.

WELL sang the Bard who called the grave, in strains
Thoughtful and sad, the "narrow house." No style
Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile
Grief of her sting; nor cheat, where he detains
The sleeping dust, stern Death. How reconcile

With truth, or with each other, decked remains
Of a once warm Abode, and that *new* Pile,
For the departed, built with curious pains
And mausolean pomp? Yet here they stand
Together, — 'mid trim walks and artful bowers,
To be looked down upon by ancient hills,
That, for the living and the dead, demand
And prompt a harmony of genuine powers;
Concord that elevates the mind, and stills.

XIII.

"REST AND BE THANKFUL!"

At the Head of Glencroe.

DOUBLING and doubling with laborious walk,
Who, that has gained at length the wished-for Height,
This brief this simple way-side Call can slight,
And rests not thankful? Whether cheered by talk
With some loved friend, or by the unseen hawk
Whistling to clouds and sky-born streams, that shine
At the sun's outbreak, as with light divine,
Ere they descend to nourish root and stalk
Of valley flowers. Nor, while the limbs repose,
Will we forget that, as the fowl can keep
Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air,
And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's sweep, —

So may the Soul, through powers that Faith bestows,
Win rest, and ease, and peace, with bliss that Angels share.

XIV.

HIGHLAND HUT.

See what gay wild-flowers deck this earth-built Cot,
Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and how it may,
Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray
Like wreaths of vapor without stain or blot.
The limpid mountain rill avoids it not;
And why shouldst thou? — If rightly trained and bred,
Humanity is humble, finds no spot
Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to tread.
The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery roof,
Undressed the pathway leading to the door;
But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor;
Search, for their worth, some gentle heart wrong proof,
Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials fewer,
Belike less happy. — Stand no more aloof! *

* See Note.

XV.

THE HIGHLAND BROACH.

THE exact resemblance which the old Broach (still in use, though rarely met with, among the Highlanders) bears to the Roman Fibula must strike every one, and concurs, with the plaid and kilt, to recall to mind the communication which the ancient Romans had with this remote country.

IF to Tradition faith be due,
And echoes from old verse speak true,
Ere the meek Saint, Columba, bore
Glad tidings to Iona's shore,
No common light of nature blest
The mountain region of the west,
A land where gentle manners ruled
O'er men in dauntless virtues schooled,
That raised, for centuries, a bar
Impervious to the tide of war:
Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain
Where haughty Force had striven in vain;
And, 'mid the works of skilful hands,
By wanderers brought from foreign lands
And various climes, was not unknown
The clasp that fixed the Roman Gown;
The Fibula, whose shape, I ween,
Still in the Highland Broach is seen,
The silver Broach of massy frame,
Worn at the breast of some grave Dame
On road or path, or at the door
Of fern-thatched hut or heathy moor:

But delicate of yore its mould,
And the material finest gold;
As might beseem the fairest Fair,
Whether she graced the royal chair,
Or shed, within a vaulted hall,
No fancied lustre on the wall
Where shields of mighty heroes hung,
While Fingal heard what Ossian sung.

The heroic Age expired, — it slept
Deep in its tomb: — the bramble crept
O'er Fingal's hearth; the grassy sod
Grew on the floors his sons had trod:
Malvina! where art thou? Their state
The noblest-born must abdicate;
The fairest, while with fire and sword
Come Spoilers, horde impelling horde,
Must walk the sorrowing mountains, dreat
By ruder hands in homelier vest.
Yet still the female bosom lent,
And loved to borrow, ornament;
Still was its inner world a place
Reached by the dews of heavenly grace;
Still pity to this last retreat
Clove fondly; to his favorite seat
Love wound his way by soft approach,
Beneath a massier Highland Broach.

When alternations came of rage
Yet fiercer, in a darker age;

And feuds, where, clan encountering clan,
The weaker perished to a man;
For maid and mother, when despair
Might else have triumphed, baffling prayer,
One small procession lacked not power,
Provided in a calmer hour,
To meet such need as might befall, —
Roof, raiment, bread, or burial:
For woman, even of tears bereft,
The hidden silver Broach was left.

As generations come and go,
Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow;
Fate, fortune, sweeps strong powers away,
And feeble, of themselves, decay;
What poor abodes the heirloom hide,
In which the castle once took pride!
Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,
If saved at all, are saved by stealth.
Lo! ships, from seas by nature barred,
Mount along ways by man prepared;
And in far-stretching vales, whose streams
Seek other seas, their canvas gleams.
Lo! busy towns spring up, on coasts
Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts;
Soon, like a lingering star forlorn
Among the novelties of morn,
While young delights on old encroach,
Will vanish the last Highland Broach.

But when, from out their viewless bed,
Like vapors, years have rolled and spread;
And this poor verse, and worthier lays,
Shall yield no light of love or praise;
Then, by the spade, or cleaving plough,
Or torrent from the mountain's brow,
Or whirlwind, reckless what his might
Entombs, or forces into light;
Blind Chance, a volunteer ally,
That oft befriends Antiquity,
And clears Oblivion from reproach,
May render back the Highland Broach.*

XVI.

THE BROWNIE.

[Upon a small island not far from the head of Loch Lomond are some remains of an ancient building, which was for several years the abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once powerful in that neighborhood. Passing along the shore opposite this island in the year 1814, the Author learned these particulars, and that this person then living there had acquired the appellation of "The Brownie." See "The Brownie's Cell," p. 48, to which the following is a sequel.]

"How disappeared he?" Ask the newt and toad;
Ask of his fellow-men, and they will tell

* How much the Broach is sometimes prized by persons in humble stations may be gathered from an occurrence mentioned to me by a female friend. She had an opportunity of benefit

How he was found, cold as an icicle,
Under an arch of that forlorn abode;
Where he, unpropp'd, and by the gathering flood
Of years hemmed round, had dwelt, prepared to try
Privation's worst extremities, and die
With no one near save the omnipresent God.
Verily so to live was an awful choice, —
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom;
But in the mould of mercy all is cast
For Souls familiar with the Eternal Voice;
And this forgotten Taper to the last
Drove from itself, we trust, all frightful gloom.

XVII.

TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING STAR.

Composed at Loch Lomond

THOUGH joy attend thee orient at the birth
Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most
To watch thy course when Day-light, fled from earth,
In the gray sky hath left his lingering Ghost,
Perplexed as if between a splendor lost

ting a poor old woman in her own hut, who, wishing to make a return, said to her daughter, in Erse, in a tone of plaintive earnestness, "I would give anything I have, but I *hope* she does not wish for my Broach!" and, uttering these words, she put her hand upon the Broach which fastened her kerchief, and which, she imagined, had attracted the eye of her benefactress

And splendor slowly mustering. Since the Sun,
The absolute, the world-absorbing one,
Relinquished half his empire to the host
Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,
Holy as princely, who that looks on thee
Touching, as now, in thy humility,
The mountain borders of this seat of care,
Can question that thy countenance is bright,
Celestial Power, as much with love as light?

XVIII.

BOTHWELL CASTLE.

(Passed unseen, on account of stormy weather.)

Immured in Bothwell's towers, at times the Brave
(So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn
The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.
Once on those steeps *I* roamed at large, and have
In mind the landscape, as if still in sight;
The river glides, the woods before me wave;
Then why repine that now in vain I crave
Needless renewal of an old delight?
Better to thank a dear and long-past day
For joy its sunny hours were free to give
Than blame the present, that our wish hath crossed.
Memory, like sleep, hath powers which dreams obey,
Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive:
How little that she cherishes is lost!

XIX.

PICTURE OF DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN, AT HAMILTON PALACE.

Amid a fertile region green with wood
And fresh with rivers, well did it become
The ducal owner, in his palace-home
To naturalize this tawny Lion brood;
Children of Art, that claim strange brotherhood
(Couched in their den) with those that roam at large
Over the burning wilderness, and charge
The wind with terror while they roar for food.
Satiate are *these;* and stilled to eye and ear;
Hence, while we gaze, a more enduring fear!
Yet is the Prophet calm, nor would the cave
Daunt him, if his Companions, now bedrowsed,
Outstretched and listless, were by hunger roused:
Man placed him here, and God, he knows, can save.

XX.

THE AVON.

(A feeder of the Annan.)

Avon, — a precious, an immortal name!
Yet is it one that other rivulets bear
Like this unheard of, and their channels wear
Like this contented, though unknown to Fame:

For great and sacred is the modest claim
Of Streams to Nature's love, where'er they flow;
And ne'er did Genius slight them, as they go,
Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding without blame.
But Praise can waste her voice on work of tears,
Anguish, and death: full oft, where innocent blood
Has mixed its current with the limpid flood,
Her heaven-offending trophies Glory rears:
Never for like distinction may the good
Shrink from *thy* name, pure Rill, with unpleased ears.

XXI.

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM AN EMINENCE IN INGLEWOOD FOREST.

The forest huge of ancient Caledon
Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,
That swept from hill to hill, from flood to flood:
On her last thorn the nightly moon has shone;
Yet still, though unappropriate Wild be none,
Fair parks spread wide where Adam Bell might deign
With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive again,
To kill for merry feast their venison.
Nor wants the holy Abbot's gliding Shade
His church with monumental wreck bestrewn;
The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost unlaid,
Hath still his castle, though a skeleton,
That he may watch by night, and lessons con
Of power that perishes, and rights that fade.

XXII.

HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PENRITH.

HERE stood an Oak, that long had borne affixed
To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle art,
Among its withering topmost branches mixed,
The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,
Whom the Dog Hercules pursued, — his part
Each desperately sustaining, till at last
Both sank and died, the life-veins of the chased
And chaser bursting here with one dire smart.
Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat!
High was the trophy hung with pitiless pride;
Say, rather, with that generous sympathy
That wants not, even in rudest breasts, a seat;
And, for this feeling's sake, let no one chide
Verse that would guard thy memory, HART'S-HORN TREE! *

XXIII.

FANCY AND TRADITION.

THE Lovers took within this ancient grove
Their last embrace; beside those crystal springs
The Hermit saw the Angel spread his wings
For instant flight; the Sage in yon alcove

* See Note.

Sat musing; on that hill the Bard would rove,
Not mute, where now the linnet only sings:
Thus everywhere to truth Tradition clings,
Or Fancy localizes Powers we love.
Were only History licensed to take note
Of things gone by, her meagre monuments
Would ill suffice for persons and events:
There is an ampler page for man to quote,
A readier book of manifold contents,
Studied alike in palace and in cot.

XXIV.

COUNTESS' PILLAR.

[On the road-side between Penrith and Appleby, there stands a pillar with the following inscription:—

"This pillar was erected, in the year 1656, by Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c., for a memorial of her last parting with her pious mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2d of April, 1616; in memory whereof she hath left an annuity of 4*l.* to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham, every 2d day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. Laus Deo!"]

While the Poor gather round, till the end of time
May this bright flower of Charity display
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed day;
Flower than the loveliest of the vernal prime
Lovelier, transplanted from heaven's purest clime
"Charity never faileth": on that creed,
More than on written testament or deed,

The pious Lady built with hope sublime.
Alms on this stone to be dealt out, *for ever!*
"LAUS DEO." Many a Stranger passing by
Has with that Parting mixed a filial sigh,
Blest its humane Memorial's fond endeavor;
And, fastening on those lines an eye tear-glazed,
Has ended, though no Clerk, with "God be praised!"

XXV.

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.

(From the Roman Station at Old Penrith.)

How profitless the relics that we cull,
Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome,
Unless they chasten fancies that presume
Too high, or idle agitations lull!
Of the world's flatteries if the brain be full,
To have no seat for thought were better doom,
Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull
Of him who gloried in its nodding plume.
Heaven out of view, our wishes what are they?
Our fond regrets tenacious in their grasp?
The Sage's theory? the Poet's lay? —
Mere Fibulæ without a robe to clasp;
Obsolete lamps, whose light no time recalls;
Urns without ashes, tearless lachrymals!

XXVI.

APOLOGY

FOR THE FOREGOING POEMS.

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt,
Abrupt, as without preconceived design
Was the beginning; yet the several Lays
Have moved in order, to each other bound
By a continuous and acknowledged tie,
Though unapparent, — like those Shapes distinct
That yet survive ensculptured on the walls
Of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck
Of famed Persepolis; each following each,
As might beseem a stately embassy,
In set array; these bearing in their hands
Ensign of civil power, weapon of war,
Or gift to be presented at the throne
Of the Great King; and others, as they go
In priestly vest, with holy offerings charged,
Or leading victims drest for sacrifice.
Nor will the Power we serve, that sacred Power
The Spirit of humanity, disdain
A ministration humble but sincere,
That from a threshold loved by every Muse
Its impulse took, — that sorrow-stricken door,
Whence, as a current from its fountain-head,
Our thoughts have issued, and our feelings flowed,
Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength
From kindred sources; while around us sighed

(Life's three first seasons having passed away)
Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost sprinklings
fell
(Foretaste of winter) on the moorland heights;
And every day brought with it tidings new
Of rash change, ominous for the public weal.
Hence, if dejection has too oft encroached
Upon that sweet and tender melancholy
Which may itself be cherished and caressed
More than enough; a fault so natural
(Even with the young, the hopeful, or the gay;
For prompt forgiveness will not sue in vain.

NOTES.

Page 9.

'THE following is extracted from the journal of my fellow traveller, to which, as persons acquainted with my poems will know, I have been obliged on other occasions: —

"*Dumfries, August*, 1803.

"On our way to the churchyard where Burns is buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a by-situation; the front whitewashed, dirty about the doors, as most Scotch houses are; flowering plants in the window. Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son, Francis Wallace, beside him. There is no stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some sort of monument. 'There,' said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies Mr. —— (I have forgotten the name), — a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and scarcely ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns made many a lampoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph: —

'Is there a man,' &c.

"The churchyard is full of grave-stones and expensive monuments, in all sorts of fantastic shapes, — obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, &c. When our guide had left us, we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to inquire after Mrs. Burns, who was gone to spend some time b

the sea-shore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlor. The walls were colored with a blue wash; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, in one of his letters, having received as a present. The house was cleanly and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlor on the left. In the room above the parlor the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. Burns's youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground. In our road to Brownhill, the next stage, we passed Ellisland, at a little distance on our right, — his farm house. Our pleasure in looking round would have been still greater, if the road had led us nearer the spot.

. . . . . .

"I cannot take leave of this country which we passed through to-day, without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland Mountains within half a mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighborhood has with ours, when he makes Skiddaw say:

'Scruffel, from the sky
That Annandale doth crown, with a most amorous eye
Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,
Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threaten him.'

"These lines came to my brother's memory, as well as the Cumberland saying:

'If Skiddaw hath a cap
Scruffel wots well of that.'

"We talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions: indulging ourselves in the fancy that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."

Page 65.

"*Jones! as from Calais southward.*"

(See Dedication to Descriptive Sketches.)

This excellent person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year, at the same college; and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude; which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption, —and while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasing sadness, that I trust the reader will excuse this passing mention of a man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the seventh of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part III.

Page 68. Sonnet VII.

In this and a succeeding sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweeden occupied, and of the principles AVOWED IN HIS MANIFESTOES; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous; and will, I fear, be thrown away on that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished.

Page 82. Sonnet XXVII.

"*Danger which they fear, and honor which they understand not.*"

Words in Lord Brooke's Life of Sir P. Sydney.

Page 95.

"*Zaragoza.*"

In this sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to whom I cannot refer.

Page 109.

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day: — 'When the Austrians took Hockheim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted, — not a gun was fired, — not a voice was heard; they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzenberg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water."

Page 125.

"*Thanksgiving Ode.*"

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the momentous subject here treated would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labors could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure, the splendor of this great moral triumph. If I have given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insensibility, should I state my own belief that the sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation rested that generosity which poured out the treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe: and in the same national wis-

dom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, *they* confide, who encourage a firm hope that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings; and to feed a morbid satisfaction, by aggravating these burdens in imagination; in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price: and acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that I have given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of my countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valor in the field, and by the discipline which rendered it, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, a protection from the violence of their own troops, has performed services that will not allow the language of gratitude and admiration to be suppressed or restrained (whatever be the temper of the public mind) though a scrupulous dread lest the tribute due to the past should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise. But this particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously, if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was or can be independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without a cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked, that the benefits derivable from these sources are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favorable. The same insular position

which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the idea of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and refine them by culture.

But some have more than insinuated that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power. The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honorable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned; and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise: particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination; — by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded, and its riches acquired; — by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that, no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect; — by adequate rewards, and permanent honors, conferred upon the deserving; — by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country; — and by especial care to provide and support institutions, in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add, that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject,

which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS.

The Ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through these volumes.

Page 130.

"Discipline the rule whereof is passion."
LORD BROOKE.

Page 135. Sonnet I.

If in this Sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissards of Calais, let me take shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events, the resemblance was striking.

Page 136.

"*Bruges.*"

This is not the first poetical tribute which in our times has been paid to this beautiful city. Mr. Southey, in the "Poet's Pilgrimage," speaks of it in lines which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of connecting with my own.

"Time hath not wronged her, nor hath ruin sought
Rudely her splendid structures to destroy,
Save in those recent days, with evil fraught,
When mutability, in drunken joy
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,
Let loose her fierce and many-headed beast.

"But for the scars in that unhappy rage
Inflicted, firm she stands and undecayed;
Like our first Sires, a beautiful old age
Is hers in venerable years arrayed;

And yet to her benignant stars may bring,
What fate denies to man, — a second spring.

"When I may read of tilts in days of old,
And tourneys graced by Chieftains of renown,
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,
If fancy would portray some stately town,
Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,
Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee."

In this city are many vestiges of the splendor of the Burgundian Dukedom, and the long black mantle universally worn by the females is probably a remnant of the old Spanish connection, which, if I do not much deceive myself, is traceable in the grave deportment of its inhabitants. Bruges is comparatively little disturbed by that curious contest, or rather conflict, of Flemish with French propensities in matters of taste, so conspicuous through other parts of Flanders. The hotel to which we drove at Ghent furnished an odd instance. In the passages were paintings and statues, after the antique, of Hebe and Apollo; and in the garden, a little pond about a yard and a half in diameter, with a weeping-willow bending over it, and under the shade of that tree, in the centre of the pond, a wooden painted statue of a Dutch or Flemish boor, looking ineffably tender upon his mistress, and embracing her. A living duck, tethered at the feet of the sculptured lovers, alternately tormented a miserable eel and itself with endeavors to escape from its bonds and prison. Had we chanced to espy the hostess of the hotel in this quaint rural retreat, the exhibition would have been complete. She was a true Flemish figure, in the dress of the days of Holbein; her symbol of office, a weighty bunch of keys, pendent from her portly waist. In Brussels, the modern taste in costume, architecture, &c. has got the mastery; in Ghent there is a struggle: but in Bruges old images are still paramount, and an air of monastic life among the quiet goings-on of a thinly-peopled city is inexpressibly soothing; a pensive grace seems to be cast over all, even the very children. — *Extract from Journal.*

Page 141.

"*Where unremitting frosts the rocky crescent bleach.*"

"Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms; let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent, with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose that in the very middle of the wall a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous *Roland*, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the 'BRECHE DE ROLAND.'" —*Raymond's Pyrenees.*

Page 143.

"*Miserere Domine.*"

See the beautiful song in Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy, "The Remorse." Why is the harp of Quantock silent?

Page 144.

"*Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly*
Doth Danube spring to life!"

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described; at present, the contrast is most striking. The Spring appears in a capacious stone basin in front of a ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it; and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself. The *copiousness* of the spring at *Doneschingen* must have procured for it the honor of being named the Source of the Danube.

Page 145.

'The Staub-bach" is a narrow stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewha-

overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and, after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess; only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the Waterfall, — and reminded me of religious services chanted to Streams and Fountains in Pagan times. Mr. Southey has thus accurately characterized the peculiarity of this music: "While we were at the Waterfall, some half-score peasants, chiefly women and girls, assembled just out of reach of the Spring, and set up — surely, the wildest chorus that ever was heard by human ears — a song not of articulate sounds, but in which the voice was used as a mere instrument of music, more flexible than any which art could produce, — sweet, powerful, and thrilling beyond description." — See Notes to "A Tale of Paraguay."

Page 146.

"*Engelberg.*"

The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honor which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it.

Page 163.

"*Though searching damps and many an envious flaw*
Have marred this work."

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs, — I speak of it as I felt. The copy exhibited in London some years ago, and the engraving by Merghen, are both admirable; but in the original is a power which neither of those works has attained, or even approached.

Page 166.

"*Of figures human and divine.*"

The Statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labor, judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup-d'œil*, from the best point of view, which is half-way up the spire, must strike an unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach. — Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the plain of Lombardy between!

Page 176.

"*Still, with those white-robed Shapes, — a living Stream, —*
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise."

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin, — but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1,000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery): it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the Glacier columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the *moving* Figures gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

Page 182. Sonnet XXXV.

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Bonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Cæsar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards *were to float.* He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the Soldiery to erect on that ground, in memory of the foundation of the "Legion of Honor," a Column, — which was not completed at the time we were there.

Page 183.

"*We mark majestic herds of cattle, free*
To ruminate."

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Everywhere one misses, in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.

Page 186.

"*Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern Forks.*"

LES FOURCHES, the point at which the two chains of mountains part that inclose the Valais, which terminates at ST. MAURICE.

Page 186.

"*Ye that occupy*
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen's Mount."

Sarnen, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Underwalden: the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose chateau formerly stood there. On the 1st of January, 1308, the great

day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strong-holds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well described by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland.

Page 187.

"*Calls me to pace her honored Bridge.*"

The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History, on the Cathedral Bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed.

Page 192.

"*Although 't is fair,*
'T will be another Yarrow."

These words were quoted to me from "Yarrow Unvisited," by Sir Walter Scott, when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy: and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janicular Mount, was reported to me by a lady who had the honor of conducting him thither.

Page 198.

"*His sepulchral verse.*"

If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far

I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them in the fifth volume, under the head of "Epitaphs and Elegiac Pieces."

Page 203.

"*Aquapendente.*"

It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church; — a movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps, in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labors I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity.

Page 203.

Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio the Pine-tree, as described in the Sonnet; and, while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down.

Page 215.

"*Camaldoli.*"

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo (or Rumwald, as our ancestors Saxonized the name) in the eleventh century, the ground (*campo*) being given by a Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the *gentlemen* of the monastic orders. The Society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolized by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large, unattractive edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wider region of the forest. It comprehends between 20 and 30 distinct residences, each including for its single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives, he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had, in the year 1831, fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about 40 years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d' Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been 13 years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer, there was a small collection of books. "I read only," said he, "books of asceticism and mystical theology." On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated *Scaramelli*, *San Giovanni della Croce*, *Saint Dionysius the Areopagite* (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics. These names may interest some of my readers.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. It was probably a day of seclusion. The reader will perceive that these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man.

Page 217.

"*What aim had they, the pair of Monks*"

In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice, that I saw among them no other figures at all resembling, in size or complexion, the two Monks described in this Sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, which they could not have approached without being carried in this or some other way, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from inquiring. An account has before been given of the hermitage they were about to enter. It was visited by us towards the end of the month of May; yet snow was lying thick under the pine-trees, within a few yards of the gate.

Page 218.

"*At Vallombrosa.*"

The name of Milton is pleasingly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the Monk, without any previous question from me, pointed out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the Poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in "Paradise Lost" where this place is mentioned. It is said, that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken; the *natural* woods of the region of Vallombrosa *are* deciduous, and spread to a great extent, those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines; but they are avenues of trees *planted* within a few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood; plots of which are periodically cut down. The appearance of those

narrow avenues, upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of the height which the trees attain by being *forced* to grow upwards, is often very impressive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years old, pointed this out to me in several places.

Page 227.

" *More high, the Dacian force,*
To hoof and finger mailed."

Here and infra, see Forsyth.

Page 246.

"*The River Duddon.*"

A Poet whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the " Ruins of Rome ":

" The rising Sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft ";

and ends thus:

" The setting Sun displays
His visible great round, between yon towers,
As through two shady cliffs."

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, " Lewes on Hill," is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

" To-morrow for severer thought, but now
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day."

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the Reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years; — the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to

describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground preoccupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem to be entitled "The Brook," of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance, by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it? —— There is a sympathy in streams, — "one calleth to another"; and I would gladly believe that "The Brook" will, erelong, murmur in concert with "The Duddon." But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say, that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature, without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages; — through the "Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius" of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth, by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns, (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo "Brook,")

> "The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,
> Till by himsel' he learned to wander,
> Adown some trotting burn's meander,
> AND NA' THINK LANG."

Page 252.

"There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness;
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue."

These two lines are in a great measure taken from "The

Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem," by the Rev. Joseph Sympson. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "Vision of Alfred" is harmonious and animated. In describing the motions of the Sylphs, that constitute the strange machinery of his Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile:—

"Glancing from their plumes,
A changeful light the azure vault illumes.
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,
That, wavering to and fro, their radiance shed
On Bothnia's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread,
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,
And still the balance of his frame preserves,
Wheeled on alternate foot in lengthening curves,
Sees at a glance, above him and below,
Two rival heavens with equal splendor glow.
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems;
For all around with soft effulgence gleams;
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day."

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmoreland.

Pages 259, 260. Sonnets XVII. and XVIII.

The EAGLE requires a large domain for its support; but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steeps of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal Lake, and re

mained some hours near its banks: the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle. — There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the Passes of Kirkstone, Dun mailraise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal Lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately. — The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons. The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets, (which together may be considered as a Poem,) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published: — "The road leading from Coniston to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the River Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale; wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter, Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone.

"The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed; but its course is soon again ruffled, and the

current thrown into every variety of foam which the rocky channel of a river can give to water." — *Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes*, Vol. I. pp. 98 – 100.

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Coniston over Walna Scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favorable station, a rude footbridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the way-side. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with gray rocks plumed with birch-trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, calls to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man, that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and color, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladsomeness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its path ways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house, exchanging "good morrows" as he passed the open doors; but at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly ligh

gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; — *then*, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent, passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of THE PEN; the one opposite is called WALLA-BARROW CRAG, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and, at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is *finished!*"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, "are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls," (or rather waterbreaks, for none of them are high,) "displayed in the short space of half a mile." That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. "The concussion," says Mr. Green, speaking of the event, (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril,) "was heard, not without alarm, by the neighboring shepherds." But to return to Seathwaite churchyard: it contains the following inscription: —

"In Memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the

25th of June, 1802, in the 93d year of his age, and 67th of his Curacy at Seathwaite.

"Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age."

In the parish register of Seathwaite Chapel is this notice:—

"Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity."

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, &c. In the seventh book of the Excursion, an abstract of his character is given, beginning,

> "A Priest abides before whose life such doubts
> Fall to the ground";—

and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this Memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and through his boyhood and youth continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labor. At that period few of these dales were furnished with school-houses, the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater; not being called upon, probably, in

that situation to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a "Gentleman" in the neighborhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies: the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston, — the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, *viz.* five pounds *per annum:* but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the helpmate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted: —

"To Mr. ——.

"Sir, "*Coniston, July* 26, 1754.

"I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a long, square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons, a checker shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them (what we call clogs in these parts), with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, the rest in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds' weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight

miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humor that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself."

Then follows a letter from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given.

"By his frugality and good management, he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care, than to anything else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied, when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man who, for his candor and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honor to the country he is in, and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

From the Rev. Robert Walker.

Sir, — Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C——, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, as healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows: Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months: Mary, fifteen: Moses, thirteen

years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months, Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my Chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17*l.*, of which is paid in cash, viz., 5*l.* from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 5*l.* from W. P., Esq., of P——, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3*l.* from the several inhabitants of L——, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 4*l.* yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3*l.*; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behavior of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and good-will with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the Established Church, not one Dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40*l.* for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavors, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessaries of life. By what I have written, (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge,) I hope you will not think your favor to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite misbestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself,

"Sir,

"Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,

"R. W., Curate of S——."

"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop, (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me,) thus expresses himself. "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha: indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also, which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes: —

"My Lord, —I have the favor of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE, —

"Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

"The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years; he entered the College of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavors, from a small income, to rear a numerous family; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behavior, so far in life, has been irreproachable; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favorable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese, and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to

"Your Grace's very dutiful and most obedient
"Son and servant,
"ROBERT WALKER."

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday were served, upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth, for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their meats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible

that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and what would to many have been a high price of self-denial was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half a guinea may be left for "little Robert's pocket-money," who was then at school: intrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says, "may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly," and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. "We," meaning his wife and himself, "are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us, we are not only mortal, but must expect erelong to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours: let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

"ROBERT WALKER."

He loved old customs and old usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighboring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity. — From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay, gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling the large amount at the end of the

year surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than 2,000*l.*; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further *explanatory* details. — And to begin with his industry: eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labors of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion-table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labor, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sat, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighborhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c., with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labors (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz. between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation, he joined the labors of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres, in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbors in haymaking and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented

him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece; less as a recompense for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere: but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the homespun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit remains neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbors, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labor. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honor the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the

year, was salted and dried for winter provision: the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes. By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, "from wanting the necessaries of life," but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father's example, his precepts and injunctions: he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavored to bring up his family, that if one of them had chanced to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child's carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one, it might be thought, could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the humblest uses, and keep his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavorable, and where to the direct cultivation of the mind so small a portion of time was allotted? But in this extraordinary man things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy "he never sent empty away," — the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale, — the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbors, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor

could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that, as in the practice of their pastor there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing, that, upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also, — while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbors as themselves, and do as they would be done unto, — that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labors by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Burkitt's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures: not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic, and somewhat curious. "There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and kneeled

down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife, to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years; one son and his wife; four daughters, each with her husband; whose ages, all added together, amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes to the chapel where they all communicated will measure more than 1,000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact, that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty."

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no Dissenters in his cure, of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention, that, at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker; — whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the church between persons not in religous sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplying disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay annual interest due under the title of Church-stock; * a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blamable need not be determined; — certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments; and however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the tres-

* Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which "seeketh not her own," he would rather forego his rights than distrain for dues which the parties liable refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

passes of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties. — It would be unpardonable to omit, that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the partner of his long life. She was equally strict in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, "She was no less excellent than her husband: she was good to the poor; she was good to everything!" He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one granddaughter; and when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and, feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the chapel, a few steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey!

> "O 't is a burden, Cromwell, 't is a burden
> Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!"

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet inclosure of consecrated ground in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the churchyard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale, — masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn, — it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn: it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society, -- changes which have proved especially unfavorable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances: had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and confirmatory of the above account, extracts from a paper in the Christian Remembrancer, October, 1819: it bears an assumed signature, but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker, whose worth it commemorates by a record not the less valuable for being written in very early youth.

"His house was a nursery of virtue. All the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, characterized the whole family. No railings, no idleness, no indulgence of passion, were permitted. Every child, however young, had its appointed engagements; every hand was busy. Knitting, spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes, making shoes, were by the different children constantly performing. The father himself, sitting amongst them, and guiding their thoughts, was engaged in the same occupations.

"He sat up late, and rose early; when the family were at rest, he retired to a little room which he had built on the roof of his house. He had slated it, and fitted it up with shelves for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold winter's night, without fire, while the roof was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writing till the day dawned. He taught the children in the chapel, for

there was no school-house. Yet in that cold, damp place he never had a fire. He used to send the children in parties either to his own fire at home, or make them run up the mountain-side.

. . . . . .

"It may be further mentioned, that he was a passionate admirer of Nature; she was his mother, and he was a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains, it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun; and in tranquil evenings, as it slided behind the hills, he blessed its departure. He was skilled in fossils and plants; a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his children. They shared all his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information. — Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

. . . . . .

"Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his ninetieth year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicuity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of gray hairs, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that I never see a hoary-headed clergyman without thinking of Mr. Walker. . . . . He allowed no Dissenter or Methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his cure: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one Dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish. Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honor, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolic descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times

without thinking that one of the beloved Apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

. . . . . .

"Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock, that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humored. He went to bed about twelve o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. "How clear the moon shines to-night!" He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing, followed him to the grave."

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker taught school, I will add a few memoranda from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

"Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great
As are his mounting wishes; but for me,
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.
HENRY FOREST, Curate."

"Honor, the idol which the most adore,
Receives no homage from my knee;
Content in privacy I value more
Than all uneasy dignity."

"Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708, being twenty-five years of age."

"This curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's Boun-

ty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Ye said 9th of May, ye said Mr Curwen went to the office, and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

"Hæc testor H. FOREST."

In another place he records, that the sycamore-trees were planted in the churchyard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part: —

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu
Diffugiunt, nulloque sono convertitur annus;
Utendum est ætate, cito pede præterit ætas."

Page 270.

"*We feel that we are greater than we know.*"

"And feel that I am happier than I know."

MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

Page 284.

"*Highland Hut.*"

This sonnet describes the *exterior* of a Highland hut, as often seen under morning or evening sunshine. To the authoress of the "Address to the Wind," and other poems, in these volumes, who was my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal, which accurately describes, under particular circumstances, the beautiful appearance of the *interior* of one of these rude habitations.

'On our return from the Trosachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katrine. I was faint from cold: the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I sat down in the chimney corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and, having put our clothes in the way of drying, we all sat down, thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet, or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly, though not very expeditiously.

"A Cumberland man of the same rank would not have had such a notion of what was fit and right in his own house, or, if he had, one would have accused him of servility; but in the Highlander it only seemed like politeness (however erroneous and painful to us), naturally growing out of the dependence of the inferiors of a clan upon their laird; he did not, however, refuse to let his wife bring out the whiskey-bottle for his refreshment, at our request. 'She keeps a dram,' as the phrase is: indeed, I believe there is scarcely a lonely house by the way-side, in Scotland, where travellers may not be accommodated with a dram. We asked for sugar, butter, barley-bread, and milk; and, with a smile and a stare more of kindness than wonder, she replied, 'Ye 'll get that,' bringing each article separately. We caroused our cups of coffee, laughing like children at the strange atmosphere in which we were: the smoke came in gusts, and spread along the walls; above our heads in the chimney (where the hens were roosting) it appeared like clouds in the sky. We laughed and laughed again, in spite of the smarting of our eyes, yet had a quieter pleasure in observing the beauty of the beams and rafters gleaming between the clouds of smoke: they had been crusted over, and varnished by many winters, till where the firelight fell upon them, they had become as glossy as black rocks, on a sunny day, cased in ice. When we had eaten our supper we sat about half an

hour, and I think I never felt so deeply the blessing of a hospitable welcome and a warm fire. The man of the house repeated from time to time that we should often tell of this night when we got to our homes, and interposed praises of his own lake, which he had more than once, when we were returning in the boat, ventured to say was 'bonnier than Loch Lomond.' Our companion from the Trosachs, who, it appeared, was an Edinburgh drawing-master, going, during the vacation, on a pedestrian tour to John o'Groat's house, was to sleep in the barn with my fellow-travellers, where the man said he had plenty of dry hay. I do not believe that the hay of the Highlands is ever very dry, but this year it had a better chance than usual: wet or dry, however, the next morning they said they had slept comfortably. When I went to bed, the mistress, desiring me to '*go ben*,' attended me with a candle, and assured me that the bed was dry, though not 'sic as I had been used to.' It was of chaff: there were two others in the room, a cupboard and two chests, upon one of which stood milk in wooden vessels, covered over. The walls of the house were of stone unplastered: it consisted of three apartments, the cow-house at one end, the kitchen or house in the middle, and the spence at the other end; the rooms were divided, not up to the rigging, but only to the beginning of the roof, so that there was a free passage for light and smoke from one end of the house to the other. I went to bed some time before the rest of the family; the door was shut between us, and they had a bright fire, which I could not see, but the light it sent up amongst the varnished rafters and beams, which crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a manner as I have seen the under-boughs of a large beech-tree withered by the depth of shade above, produced the most beautiful effect that can be conceived. It was like what I should suppose an underground cave or temple to be, with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some means or other; and yet the colors were more like those of melted gems. I lay looking up till the light of the fire faded away, and the man and his wife and child had crept into their bed at the other end of the room: I did not sleep much, but passed a comfortable night; for my bed, though hard, was warm and clean: the

unusualness of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I could hear the waves beat against the shore of the lake; a little rill close to the door made a much louder noise, and, when I sat up in my bed, I could see the lake through an open window-place at the bed's head. Add to this, it rained all night. I was less occupied by remembrance of the Trosachs, beautiful as they were, than the vision of the Highland hut, which I could not get out of my head; I thought of the Faery-land of Spenser, and what I had read in romance at other times; and then what a feast it would be for a London Pantomime-maker could he but transplant it to Drury Lane, with all its beautiful colors!" — *MS.*

Page 290.

"*Once on those steeps* I *roamed.*"

The following is from the same MS., and gives an account of the visit to Bothwell Castle here alluded to: —

"It was exceedingly delightful to enter thus unexpectedly upon such a beautiful region. The castle stands nobly, overlooking the Clyde. When we came up to it, I was hurt to see that flower-borders had taken place of the natural overgrowings of the ruin, the scattered stones, and wild plants. It is a large and grand pile of red freestone, harmonizing perfectly with the rocks of the river, from which, no doubt, it has been hewn. When I was a little accustomed to the unnaturalness of a modern garden, I could not help admiring the excessive beauty and luxuriance of some of the plants, particularly the purple-flowered clematis, and a broad-leafed creeping plant without flowers, which scrambled up the castle wall, along with the ivy, and spread its vine-like branches so lavishly that it seemed to be in its natural situation, and one could not help thinking that, though not self-planted among the ruins of this country, it must somewhere have its native abode in such places. If Bothwell Castle had not been close to the Douglas mansion, we should have been disgusted with the possessor's miserable conception of *adorning* such a venerable ruin; but it is so very near to the house, that of necessity the pleasure grounds must have extended beyond it, and perhaps the neat

ness of a shaven lawn and the complete desolation natural to a ruin might have made an unpleasing contrast; and, besides being within the precincts of the pleasure-grounds, and so very near to the dwelling of a noble family, it has forfeited, in some degree, its independent majesty, and becomes a tributary to the mansion: its solitude being interrupted, it has no longer the command over the mind in sending it back into past times, or excluding the ordinary feelings which we bear about us in daily life. We had then only to regret that the castle and the house were so near to each other; and it was impossible *not* to regret it; for the ruin presides in state over the river, far from city or town, as if it might have a peculiar privilege to preserve its memorials of past ages, and maintain its own character for centuries to come. We sat upon a bench under the high trees, and had beautiful views of the different reaches of the river, above and below. On the opposite bank, which is finely wooded with elm and other trees, are the remains of a priory built upon a rock; and rock and ruin are so blended, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other. Nothing can be more beautiful than the little remnant of this holy place; elm-trees (for we were near enough to distinguish them by their branches) grow out of the walls, and overshadow a small but very elegant window. It can scarcely be conceived what a grace the castle and priory impart to each other; and the river Clyde flows on, smooth and unruffled, below, seeming to my thoughts more in harmony with the sober and stately images of former times, than if it had roared over a rocky channel, forcing its sound upon the ear. It blended gently with the warbling of the smaller birds, and the chattering of the larger ones, that had made their nests in the ruins. In this fortress the chief of the English nobility were confined after the battle of Bannockburn. If a man *is* to be a prisoner, he scarcely could have a more pleasant place to solace his captivity; but I thought that, for close confinement, I should prefer the banks of a lake, or the sea-side. The greatest charm of a brook or river is in the liberty to pursue it through its windings: you can then take it in whatever mood you like; silent or noisy sportive or quiet. The beauties of a brook or river must be sought, and the pleasure is in going in search of them; those

of a lake or of the sea come to you of themselves. These rude warriors cared little, perhaps, about either; and yet, if one may judge from the writings of Chaucer, and from the old romances, more interesting passions were connected with natural objects in the days of chivalry than now; though going in search of scenery, as it is called, had not then been thought of. I had previously heard nothing of Bothwell Castle, at least nothing that I remembered; therefore, perhaps, my pleasure was greater, compared with what I received elsewhere, than others might feel." — *MS. Journal.*

Page 293.

"*Hart's-horn Tree.*"

"In the time of the first Robert de Clifford, in the year 1333 or 1334, Edward Baliol king of Scotland came into Westmoreland, and stayed some time with the said Robert at his castles of Appleby, Brougham, and Pendragon. And during that time they ran a stag by a single greyhound out of Whinfell Park to Redkirk, in Scotland, and back again to this place; where, being both spent, the stag leaped over the pales, but died on the other side; and the greyhound, attempting to leap, fell, and died on the contrary side. In memory of this fact the stag's horns were nailed upon a tree just by, and (the dog being named Hercules) this rhythm was made upon them:—

'Hercules killed Hart a greese,
And Hart a greese killed Hercules.'

The tree to this day bears the name of Hart's-horn Tree. The horns in process of time were almost grown over by the growth of the tree, and another pair was put up in their place." — *Nicholson and Burns's History of Westmoreland and Cumberland.*

The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in a decayed state, by the side of the high road leading from Penrith to Appleby. This whole neighborhood abounds in interesting traditions and vestiges of antiquity; viz. Julian's Bower; Brougham and Penrith Cas-

...les; Penrith Beacon, and the curious remains in Penrith Churchyard; Arthur's Round Table, and, close by, Mayborough; the excavation, called the Giant's Cave, on the banks of the Emont; Long Meg and her Daughters, near Eden, &c., &c.

END OF VOL. III

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE;

OR,

THE FATE OF THE NORTONS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

During the Summer of 1807, I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire; and the Poem of the White Doe, founded upon a tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

DEDICATION.

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,
And, Mary! oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay
How Una, sad of soul, — in sad attire, —
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Belovèd! pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious in compassion shed
For her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited,

Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart,
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught;
Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,
And all its finer inspiration caught:
Till, in the bosom of our rustic Cell,
We by a lamentable change were taught
That "bliss with mortal Man may not abide";
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied!

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,
For us the voice of melody was mute.
— But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow
And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,
Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow
A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,
Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content
From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us, it beguiled us, then, to hear
Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell;
And griefs whose aery motion comes not near
The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel:
Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,
High over hill and low adown the dell
Again we wandered, willing to partake
All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song *of mine* once more could please,
Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,
Is tempered and allayed by sympathies
Aloft ascending, and descending deep,
Even to the inferior Kinds; whom forest-trees
Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep
Of the sharp winds; — fair Creatures! — to whom Heaven
A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given

This tragic Story cheered us; for it speaks
Of female patience winning firm repose;
And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,
A bright, encouraging example shows;
Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,
Needful amid life's ordinary woes; —
Hence, not for them unfitted who would bless
A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,
Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive:
O that my mind were equal to fulfil
The comprehensive mandate which they give, —
Vain aspiration of an earnest will!
Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,
Beloved Wife! such solace to impart
As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
April 20, 1815.

"Action is transitory, — a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle, — this way or that, —
'T is done; and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And has the nature of infinity.
Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem
And irremovable) gracious openings lie,
By which the soul — with patient steps of thought
Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer —
May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds
Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent
Even to the fountain-head of peace divine."

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.

'Thay that deny a God, destroy Man's nobility: for certainly Man is of kinn to the Beast by his Body; and if he be not of kinn to God by his Spirit, he is a base ignoble Creature. It destroys likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane Nature: for take an example of a Dogg, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man, who to him is instead of a God, or Melior Natura. Which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature without that confidence of a better Nature than his own could never attain. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human Nature in itself could not obtain."

LORD BACON.

CANTO FIRST.

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower
The bells ring loud with gladsome power;
The sun shines bright; the fields are gay
With people in their best array
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,
Along the banks of crystal Wharf,
Through the Vale retired and lowly,
Trooping to that summons holy.
And, up among the moorlands, see
What sprinklings of blithe company!
Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,
That down the steep hills force their way
Like cattle through the budding brooms;
Path, or no path, what care they?
And thus in joyous mood they hie
To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

What would they there? — full fifty years
That sumptuous Pile, with all its Peers,
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste
The bitterness of wrong and waste:
Its courts are ravaged; but the tower
Is standing with a voice of power,
That ancient voice which wont to call
To mass or some high festival;
And in the shattered fabric's heart
Remaineth one protected part;
A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,
Closely embowered and trimly drest;
And thither young and old repair,
This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the churchyard fills; — anon,
Look again, and they all are gone, —
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sat in the shade of the Prior's Oak
And scarcely have they disappeared
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard: —
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!
They sing a service which they feel:
For 't is the sunrise now of zeal, —
Of a pure faith the vernal prime, —
In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within;
For though the priest, more tranquilly,

Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
— When soft! — the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open green
Where is no living thing to be seen, —
And through yon gateway, where is found,
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the churchyard ground, —
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary Doe!
White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver Moon
When out of sight the clouds are driven
And she is left alone in heaven;
Or like a ship some gentle day
In sunshine sailing far away,
A glittering ship, that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead!
Lie quiet in your churchyard bed!
Ye living, tend your holy cares;
Ye multitude, pursue your prayers;
And blame not me if my heart and sight
Are occupied with one delight!
'Tis a work for Sabbath hours
If I with this bright Creature go:
Whether she be of forest bowers,

From the bowers of earth below;
Or a Spirit for one day given,
A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and through this Pile of state
Overthrown and desolate!
Now a step or two her way
Leads through space of open day,
Where the enamored sunny light
Brightens her that was so bright;
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
Falls upon her like a breath,
From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath:
Now some gloomy nook partakes
Of the glory that she makes, —
High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,
With perfect cunning framed as well
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread
Of the elder's bushy head;
Some jealous and forbidding cell,
That doth the living stars repel,
And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe
Fills many a damp, obscure recess
With lustre of a saintly show;
And, reappearing, she no less

Sheds on the flowers that round her blow
A more than sunny liveliness.
But say, among these holy places,
Which thus assiduously she paces,
Comes she with a votary's task,
Rite to perform, or boon to ask?
Fair Pilgrim! harbors she a sense
Of sorrow, or of reverence?
Can she be grieved for choir or shrine,
Crushed as if by wrath divine?
For what survives of house where God
Was worshipped, or where Man abode;
For old magnificence undone;
Or for the gentler work begun
By Nature, softening and concealing,
And busy with a hand of healing?
Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth,
That to the sapling ash gives birth;
For dormitory's length laid bare
Where the wild rose blossoms fair;
Or altar, whence the cross was rent,
Now rich with mossy ornament?
— She sees a warrior carved in stone,
Among the thick weeds, stretched alone;
A warrior, with his shield of pride
Cleaving humbly to his side,
And hands in resignation prest,
Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast;
As little she regards the sight
As a common creature might:

If she be doomed to inward care,
Or service, it must lie elsewhere.
— But hers are eyes serenely bright,
And on she moves, — with pace how light!
Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste
The dewy turf with flowers bestrown;
And thus she fares, until at last
Beside the ridge of grassy grave
In quietness she lays her down;
Gentle as a weary wave
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,
Against an anchored vessel's side;
Even so, without distress, doth she
Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,
To a lingering motion bound,
Like the crystal stream now flowing
With its softest summer sound:
So the balmy minutes pass,
While this radiant Creature lies
Couched upon the dewy grass,
Pensively, with downcast eyes.
— But now again the people raise
With awful cheer a voice of praise;
It is the last, the parting song;
And from the temple forth they throng,
And quickly spread themselves abroad,
While each pursues his several road.
But some, — a variegated band

Of middle-aged, and old, and young,
And little children by the hand
Upon their leading mothers hung, —
With mute obeisance gladly paid,
Turn towards the spot, where, full in view,
The white Doe, to her service true,
Her Sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound;
Which two spears' length of level ground
Did from all other graves divide:
As if in some respect of pride;
Or melancholy's sickly mood,
Still shy of human neighborhood;
Or guilt, that humbly would express
A penitential loneliness.

"Look, there she is, my Child! draw near;
She fears not, wherefore should we fear?
She means no harm"; — but still the Boy,
To whom the words were softly said,
Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for joy,
A shame-faced blush of glowing red!
Again the Mother whispered low,
"Now you have seen the famous Doe;
From Rylstone she hath found her way
Over the hills this Sabbath day;
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
And she will depart when we are gone
Thus doth she keep, from year to year,
Her Sabbath morning, foul or fair."

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams
The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright;
But is she truly what she seems?
He asks with insecure delight,
Asks of himself, and doubts, — and still
The doubt returns against his will:
Though he, and all the standers-by,
Could tell a tragic history
Of facts divulged, wherein appear
Substantial motive, reason clear,
Why thus the milk-white Doe is found
Couchant beside that lonely mound;
And why she duly loves to pace
The circuit of this hallowed place.
Nor to the Child's inquiring mind
Is such perplexity confined:
For, spite of sober Truth that sees
A world of fixed remembrances
Which to this mystery belong,
If, undeceived, my skill can trace
The characters of every face,
There lack not strange delusion here,
Conjecture vague, and idle fear,
And superstitious fancies strong,
Which do the gentle creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire, —
Who in his boyhood often fed
Full cheerily on convent bread
And heard old tales by the convent fire,

And to his grave will go with scars,
Relics of long and distant wars, —
That Old Man, studious to expound
The spectacle, is mounting high
To days of dim antiquity;
When Lady Aäliza mourned
Her Son, and felt in her despair
The pang of unavailing prayer;
Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,
The noble Boy of Egremound.
From which affliction, — when the grace
Of God had in her heart found place, —
A pious structure, fair to see,
Rose up, this stately Priory!
The Lady's work; — but now laid low;
To the grief of her soul, that doth come and go,
In the beautiful form of this innocent Doe:
Which, though seemingly doomed in its breast to
sustain
A softened remembrance of sorrow and pain,
Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and bright;
And glides o'er the earth like an angel of light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door;
And through the chink in the fractured floor
Look down, and see a griesly sight;
A vault where the bodies are buried upright!
There, face by face, and hand by hand,
The Claphams and Mauleverers stand;
And, in his place, among son and sire,

Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,
A valiant man, and a name of dread
In the ruthless wars of the White and Red;
Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Banbury church
And smote off his head on the stones of the porch!
Look down among them, if you dare;
Oft does the White Doe loiter there,
Prying into the darksome rent;
Nor can it be with good intent:
So thinks that Dame of haughty air,
Who hath a Page her Book to hold,
And wears a frontlet edged with gold.
Harsh thoughts with her high mood agree, —
Who counts among her ancestry
Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously!

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,
From Oxford come to his native vale,
He also hath his own conceit:
It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,
Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet
In his wanderings solitary:
Wild notes she in his hearing sang,
A song of Nature's hidden powers;
That whistled like the wind, and rang
Among the rocks and holly bowers.
T was said that she all shapes could wear
And oftentimes before him stood,
Amid the trees of some thick wood,
In semblance of a lady fair;

And taught him signs, and showed him sights,
In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights;
When under cloud of fear he lay,
A shepherd clad in homely gray;
Nor left him at his later day.
And hence, when he, with spear and shield,
Rode full of years to Flodden field,
His eye could see the hidden spring,
And how the current was to flow;
The fatal end of Scotland's King,
And all that hopeless overthrow.
But not in wars did he delight,
This Clifford wished for worthier might;
Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state;
Him his own thoughts did elevate, —
Most happy in the shy recess
Of Barden's lowly quietness.
And choice of studious friends had he
Of Bolton's dear fraternity;
Who, standing on this old church tower,
In many a calm, propitious hour,
Perused, with him, the starry sky;
Or, in their cells, with him did pry
For other lore, — by keen desire
Urged to close toil with chemic fire;
In quest, belike, of transmutations
Rich as the mine's most bright creations.
But they and their good works are fled,
And all is now disquieted, —
And peace is none, for living or dead!

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,
But look again at the radiant Doe!
What quiet watch she seems to keep,
Alone, beside that grassy heap!
Why mention other thoughts unmeet
For vision so composed and sweet?
While stand the people in a ring,
Gazing, doubting, questioning;
Yea, many overcome, in spite
Of recollections clear and bright;
Which yet do unto some impart
An undisturbed repose of heart.
And all the assembly own a law
Of orderly respect and awe;
But see, — they vanish one by one,
And, last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp! we have been full long beguiled
By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild;
To which, with no reluctant strings,
Thou hast attuned thy murmurings;
And now before this Pile we stand
In solitude, and utter peace:
But, Harp! thy murmurs may not cease, —
A Spirit, with his angelic wings,
In soft and breeze-like visitings,
Has touched thee, — and a Spirit's hand;
A voice is with us, — a command
To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,
A tale of tears, a mortal story!

CANTO SECOND.

The Harp in lowliness obeyed;
And first we sung of the greenwood shade
And a solitary Maid;
Beginning, where the song must end,
With her, and with her sylvan Friend;
The Friend, who stood before her sight,
Her only unextinguished light;
Her last companion in a dearth
Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For she it was, this Maid, who wrought
Meekly, with foreboding thought,
In vermeil colors and in gold,
An unblest work; which, standing by,
Her Father did with joy behold,
Exulting in its imagery;
A Banner, fashioned to fulfil
Too perfectly his headstrong will:
For on this Banner had her hand
Embroidered (such her Sire's command)
The sacred Cross; and figured there
The five dear wounds our Lord did bear;
Full soon to be uplifted high,
And float in rueful company!

It was the time when England's Queen
Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign dread

Nor yet the restless crown had been
Disturbed upon her virgin head;
But now the inly-working North
Was ripe to send its thousands forth,
A potent vassalage, to fight
In Percy's and in Neville's right,
Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,
Who gave their wishes open vent;
And boldly urged a general plea,
The rites of ancient piety
To be triumphantly restored,
By the stern justice of the sword!
And that same Banner on whose breast
The blameless Lady had exprest
Memorials chosen to give life
And sunshine to a dangerous strife;
That Banner, waiting for the Call,
Stood quietly in Rylstone hall.

It came; and Francis Norton said,
"O Father! rise not in this fray,—
The hairs are white upon your head;
Dear Father, hear me when I say
It is for you too late a day!
Bethink you of your own good name:
A just and gracious queen have we,
A pure religion, and the claim
Of peace on our humanity.—
'Tis meet that I endure your scorn
I am your son, your eldest born;

But not for lordship or for land,
My Father, do I clasp your knees;
The Banner touch not, stay your hand,
This multitude of men disband,
And live at home in blameless ease;
For these my brethren's sake, for me;
And, most of all, for Emily!"

Tumultuous noises filled the hall;
And scarcely could the Father hear
That name, — pronounced with a dying fall, —
The name of his only Daughter dear,
As on the Banner which stood near
He glanced a look of holy pride,
And his moist eyes were glorified;
Then did he seize the staff, and say:
"Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name:
Keep thou this ensign till the day
When I of thee require the same:
Thy place be on my better hand; —
And seven as true as thou, I see,
Will cleave to this good cause and me."
He spake, and eight brave sons straightway
All followed him, a gallant band!

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came,
The sight was hailed with loud acclaim,
And din of arms and minstrelsy,
From all his warlike tenantry,
All horsed and harnessed with him to ride, —
A voice to which the hills replied!

But Francis, in the vacant hall,
Stood silent under dreary weight, —
A phantasm, in which roof and wall
Shook, tottered, swam before his sight;
A phantasm like a dream of night!
Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,
He found his way to a postern-gate;
And when he waked, his languid eye
Was on the calm and silent sky,
With air about him breathing sweet,
And earth's green grass beneath his feet;
Nor did he fail erelong to hear
A sound of military cheer,
Faint — but it reached that sheltered spot;
He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance
Which he had grasped unknowingly,
Had blindly grasped in that strong trance,
That dimness of heart-agony;
There stood he, cleansed from the despair
And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.
The past he calmly hath reviewed:
But where will be the fortitude
Of this brave man, when he shall see
That Form beneath the spreading tree,
And know that it is Emily?

He saw her where in open view
She sat beneath the spreading yew, —

Her head upon her lap, concealing
In solitude her bitter feeling:
"Might ever *son command* a sire,
The act were justified to-day."
This to himself, — and to the Maid,
Whom now he had approached, he said:
"Gone are they, — they have their desire;
And I with thee one hour will stay,
To give thee comfort if I may."

She heard, but looked not up, nor spake;
And sorrow moved him to partake
Her silence; then his thoughts turned round,
And fervent words a passage found.

"Gone are they, bravely, though misled;
With a dear Father at their head!
The Sons obey a natural lord;
The Father had given solemn word
To noble Percy; and a force
Still stronger bends him to his course.
This said, our tears to-day may fall
As at an innocent funeral.
In deep and awful channel runs
This sympathy of Sire and Sons;
Untried, our Brothers have been loved
With heart by simple nature moved;
And now their faithfulness is proved:
For faithful we must call them, bearing
That soul of conscientious daring.

There were they all in circle, — there
Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,
John with a sword that will not fail,
And Marmaduke in fearless mail,
And those bright Twins were side by side;
And there, by fresh hopes beautified,
Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power
Of man, our youngest, fairest flower!
I, by the right of eldest born,
And in a second father's place,
Presumed to grapple with their scorn,
And meet their pity face to face;
Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,
I to my Father knelt and prayed;
And one, the pensive Marmaduke,
Methought, was yielding inwardly,
And would have laid his purpose by,
But for a glance of his Father's eye,
Which I myself could scarcely brook.

"Then be we, each and all, forgiven!
Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear,
Whose pangs are registered in heaven, —
The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,
And smiles, that dared to take their place,
Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,
As that unhallowed Banner grew
Beneath a loving old Man's view.
Thy part is done, — thy painful part;
Be thou then satisfied in heart!

A further, though far easier, task
Than thine hath been, my duties ask;
With theirs my efforts cannot blend,
I cannot for such cause contend;
Their aims I utterly forswear;
But I in body will be there.
Unarmed and naked will I go,
Be at their side, come weal or woe:
On kind occasions I may wait,
See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.
Bare breast I take and an empty hand." * —
Therewith he threw away the lance
Which he had grasped in that strong trance;
Spurned it, like something that would stand
Between him and the pure intent
Of love on which his soul was bent.

" For thee, for thee, is left the sense
Of trial past without offence
To God or man; such innocence,
Such consolation, and the excess
Of an unmerited distress;
In that thy very strength must lie.
— O Sister, I could prophesy!
The time is come that rings the knell
Of all we loved, and loved so well:
Hope nothing, if I thus may speak
To thee, a woman, and thence weak:

* See the Old Ballad, — " The Rising of the North."

Hope nothing, I repeat; for we
Are doomed to perish utterly:
'T is meet that thou with me divide
The thought while I am by thy side,
Acknowledging a grace in this,
A comfort in the dark abyss.
But look not for me when I am gone,
And be no further wrought upon·
Farewell all wishes, all debate,
All prayers for this cause, or for that!
Weep, if that aid thee; but depend
Upon no help of outward friend;
Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave
To fortitude without reprieve.
For we must fall, both we and ours, —
This mansion and these pleasant bowers,
Walks, pools, and arbors, homestead, hall, —
Our fate is theirs, will reach them all;
The young horse must forsake his manger,
And learn to glory in a Stranger;
The hawk forget his perch; the hound
Be parted from his ancient ground:
The blast will sweep us all away, —
One desolation, one decay!
And even this Creature!" which words saying
He pointed to a lovely Doe,
A few steps distant, feeding, straying;
Fair creature, and more white than snow!
"Even she will to her peaceful woods
Return, and to her murmuring floods,

And be in heart and soul the same
She was before she hither came;
Ere she had learned to love us all,
Herself beloved in Rylstone hall.
— But thou, my Sister, doomed to be
The last leaf on a blasted tree;
If not in vain we breathed the breath
Together of a purer faith;
If hand in hand we have been led,
And thou (O happy thought this day!)
Not seldom foremost in the way;
If on one thought our minds have fed,
And we have in one meaning read;
If, when at home our private weal
Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,
Together we have learned to prize
Forbearance and self-sacrifice;
If we like combatants have fared,
And for this issue been prepared;
If thou art beautiful, and youth
And thought endue thee with all truth, —
Be strong; — be worthy of the grace
Of God, and fill thy destined place:
A Soul, by force of sorrows high,
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed humanity!"

He ended, — or she heard no more;
He led her from the yew-tree shade,
And at the mansion's silent door

He kissed the consecrated Maid;
And down the valley then pursued,
Alone, the armèd Multitude.

CANTO THIRD.

Now joy for you who from the towers
Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,
Telling melancholy hours!
Proclaim it, let your Masters hear
That Norton with his band is near!
The watchmen from their station high
Pronounced the word, — and the Earls descry,
Well pleased, the armèd Company
Marching down the banks of Were.

Said fearless Norton to the pair
Gone forth to greet him on the plain:
"This meeting, noble Lords! looks fair,
I bring with me a goodly train;
Their hearts are with you: hill and dale
Have helped us: Ure we crossed, and Swale,
And horse and harness followed, — see
The best part of their Yeomanry!
— Stand forth, my Sons! — these eight are mine,
Whom to this service I commend;
Which way soe'er our fate incline,
These will be faithful to the end;

They are my all," — voice failed him here, —
"My all save one, a Daughter dear!
Whom I have left, Love's mildest birth,
The meekest Child on this blessed earth.
I had — but these are by my side,
These eight, and this is a day of pride!
The time is ripe. With festive din,
Lo! how the people are flocking in, —
Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand
When snow lies heavy upon the land."

He spake bare truth; for far and near
From every side came noisy swarms
Of Peasants in their homely gear;
And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth came
Grave Gentry of estate and name,
And Captains known for worth in arms;
And prayed the Earls in self-defence
To rise, and prove their innocence. —
"Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might,
For holy Church, and the People's right!"

The Norton fixed, at this demand,
His eye upon Northumberland,
And said: "The Minds of Men will own
No loyal rest while England's Crown
Remains without an Heir, the bait
Of strife and factions desperate;
Who, paying deadly hate in kind
Through all things else, in this can find

A mutual hope, a common mind;
And plot, and pant to overwhelm
All ancient honor in the realm.
— Brave Earls! to whose heroic veins
Our noblest blood is given in trust,
To you a suffering State complains,
And ye must raise her from the dust.
With wishes of still bolder scope
On you we look, with dearest hope;
Even for our Altars, — for the prize
In Heaven, of life that never dies;
For the old and holy Church we mourn,
And must in joy to her return.
Behold!" — and from his Son whose stand
Was on his right, from that guardian hand
He took the Banner, and unfurled
The precious folds, — "behold," said he,
"The ransom of a sinful world;
Let this your preservation be;
The wounds of hands and feet and side,
And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died.
— This bring I from an ancient hearth,
These Records wrought in pledge of love
By hands of no ignoble birth,
A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove
Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood
While she the holy work pursued."
"Uplift the Standard!" was the cry
From all the listeners that stood round,
"Plant it, — by this we live or die."

The Norton ceased not for that sound,
But said: "The prayer which ye have heard,
Much injured Earls! by these preferred,
Is offered to the Saints, the sigh
Of tens of thousands, secretly."
"Uplift it!" cried once more the Band,
And then a thoughtful pause ensued:
"Uplift it!" said Northumberland, —
Whereat, from all the multitude
Who saw the Banner reared on high
In all its dread emblazonry,
A voice of uttermost joy brake out:
The transport was rolled down the river of Were,
And Durham, the time-honored Durham, did hear,
And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were stirred by
the shout!

Now was the North in arms: — they shine
In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,
At Percy's voice: and Neville sees
His Followers gathering in from Tees,
From Were, and all the little rills
Concealed among the forkèd hills, —
Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all
Of Neville, at their Master's call
Had sat together in Raby hall!
Such strength that Earldom held of yore;
Nor wanted at this time rich store
Of well-appointed chivalry.
— Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,

And greet the old paternal shield,
They heard the summons; and, furthermore,
Horsemen and Foot of each degree,
Unbound by pledge of fealty,
Appeared, with free and open hate
Of novelties in Church and State;
Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire;
And Romish priest, in priest's attire.
And thus, in arms, a zealous Band
Proceeding under joint command,
To Durham first their course they bear;
And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat
Sang mass, — and tore the book of prayer, —
And trod the Bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward smooth and free,
"They mustered their host at Wetherby,
Full sixteen thousand fair to see"; *
The Choicest Warriors of the North!
But none for beauty and for worth
Like those eight Sons, — who, in a ring,
(Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring,)
Each with a lance, erect and tall,
A falchion, and a buckler small,
Stood by their Sire, on Clifford moor,
To guard the Standard which he bore.
On foot they girt their Father round;
And so will keep the appointed ground

* From the old Ballad.

Where'er their march: no steed will he
Henceforth bestride; — triumphantly,
He stands upon the grassy sod,
Trusting himself to the earth, and God.
Rare sight to embolden and inspire!
Proud was the field of Sons and Sire;
Of him the most; and, sooth to say,
No shape of man in all the array
So graced the sunshine of that day.
The monumental pomp of age
Was with this goodly Personage;
A stature undepressed in size,
Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,
In open victory o'er the weight
Of seventy years, to loftier height;
Magnific limbs of withered state;
A face to fear and venerate;
Eyes dark and strong; and on his head
Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,
Which a brown morion half concealed,
Light as a hunter's of the field;
And thus, with girdle round his waist,
Whereon the Banner-staff might rest
At need, he stood, advancing high
The glittering, floating Pageantry.

Who sees him? — thousands see, and one
With unparticipated gaze,
Who 'mong those thousands friend hath none,
And treads in solitary ways.

He, following wheresoe'er he might,
Hath watched the Banner from afar,
As shepherds watch a lonely star,
Or mariners the distant light
That guides them through a stormy night.
And now, upon a chosen plot
Of rising ground, yon heathy spot!
He takes alone his far-off stand,
With breast unmailed, unweaponed hand.
Bold is his aspect; but his eye
Is pregnant with anxiety,
While, like a tutelary Power,
He there stands fixed from hour to hour.
Yet sometimes in more humble guise,
Upon the turf-clad height he lies
Stretched, herdsman-like, as if to bask
In sunshine were his only task,
Or by his mantle's help to find
A shelter from the nipping wind:
And thus, with short oblivion blest,
His weary spirits gather rest.
Again he lifts his eyes; and lo!
The pageant glancing to and fro;
And hope is wakened by the sight,
He thence may learn, ere fall of night,
Which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent;
But what avails the bold intent?
A Royal army is gone forth

To quell the RISING OF THE NORTH;
They march with Dudley at their head,
And, in seven days' space, will to York be led!—
Can such a mighty Host be raised
Thus suddenly, and brought so near?
The Earls upon each other gazed,
And Neville's cheek grew pale with fear
For, with a high and valiant name,
He bore a heart of timid frame;
And bold if both had been, yet they
"Against so many may not stay." *
Back therefore will they hie to seize
A stronghold on the banks of Tees;
There wait a favorable hour,
Until Lord Dacre with his power
From Naworth come, and Howard's aid
Be with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to man,
A rumor of this purpose ran,
The Standard trusting to the care
Of him who heretofore did bear
That charge, impatient Norton sought
The Chieftains to unfold his thought,
And thus abruptly spake: "We yield
(And can it be?) an unfought field!—
How oft has strength, the strength of Heaven,
To few triumphantly been given!

* From the old Ballad.

Still do our very children boast
Of mitred Thurston, — what a Host
He conquered! — Saw we not the Plain
(And flying shall behold again)
Where faith was proved? — while to battle moved
The Standard, on the Sacred Wain
That bore it, compassed round by a bold
Fraternity of Barons old;
And with those grav-haired champions stood,
Under the saintly ensigns three,
The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood —
All confident of victory! —
Shall Percy blush, then, for his name?
Must Westmoreland be asked with shame
Whose were the numbers, where the loss,
In that other day of Neville's Cross?
When the Prior of Durham with holy hand
Raised, as the Vision gave command,
Saint Cuthbert's Relic, far and near
Kenned, on the point of a lofty spear;
While the Monks prayed in Maiden's Bower
To God descending in his power.
Less would not at our need be due
To us, who war against the Untrue; —
The delegates of Heaven we rise,
Convoked the impious to chastise:
We, we, the sanctities of old
Would re-establish and uphold:
Be warned" — His zeal the Chiefs confounded,
But word was given and the trumpet sounded:

Back through the melancholy Host
Went Norton, and resumed his post.
Alas! thought he, and have I borne
This Banner raised with joyful pride,
This hope of all posterity,
By those dread symbols sanctified;
Thus to become at once the scorn
Of babbling winds as they go by,
A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,
To the light clouds a mockery!
—"Even these poor eight of mine would stem—"
Half to himself, and half to them
He spake—"would stem, or quell, a force
Ten times their number, man and horse;
This by their own unaided might,
Without their father in their sight,
Without the Cause for which they fight;
A Cause, which on a needful day
Would breed us thousands brave as they."
—So speaking, he his reverend head
Raised towards that Imagery once more:
But the familiar prospect shed
Despondency unfelt before:
A shock of intimations vain,
Dismay, and superstitious pain,
Fell on him, with the sudden thought
Of her by whom the work was wrought:—
O wherefore was her countenance bright
With love divine and gentle light?
She would not, could not, disobey,

But her Faith leaned another way.
Ill tears she wept; I saw them fall,
I overheard her as she spake
Sad words to that mute Animal,
The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake;
She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,
This Cross in tears: by her, and one
Unworthier far we are undone, —
Her recreant Brother; he prevailed
Over that tender Spirit, — assailed
Too oft, alas! by her whose head
In the cold grave hath long been laid:
She first in reason's dawn beguiled
Her docile, unsuspecting Child:
Far back, far back my mind must go
To reach the well-spring of this woe!

While thus he brooded, music sweet
Of border tunes was played, to cheer
The footsteps of a quick retreat;
But Norton lingered in the rear,
Stung with sharp thoughts; and ere the last
From his distracted brain was cast,
Before his Father, Francis stood,
And spake in firm and earnest mood.

"Though here I bend a suppliant knee
In reverence, and unarmed, I bear
In your indignant thoughts my share;
Am grieved this backward march to see

So careless and disorderly.
I scorn your Chiefs, — men who would lead,
And yet want courage at their need:
Then look at them with open eyes!
Deserve they further sacrifice? —
If, when they shrink, nor dare oppose
In open field their gathering foes,
(And fast, from this decisive day,
Yon multitude must melt away,) —
If now I ask a grace not claimed
While ground was left for hope, unblamed
Be an endeavor that can do
No injury to them or you.
My Father! I would help to find
A place of shelter, till the rage
Of cruel men do like the wind
Exhaust itself and sink to rest;
Be Brother now to Brother joined!
Admit me in the equipage
Of your misfortunes, that at least,
Whatever fate remain behind,
I may bear witness in my breast
To your nobility of mind!"

"Thou Enemy, my bane and blight!
O bold to fight the Coward's fight
Against all good!" — but why declare,
At length, the issue of a prayer
Which love had prompted, yielding scope
Too free to one bright moment's hope?

Suffice it that the Son, who strove
With fruitless effort to allay
That passion, prudently gave way;
Nor did he turn aside to prove
His Brothers' wisdom or their love,
But calmly from the spot withdrew;
His best endeavors to renew,
Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

CANTO FOURTH.

'T is night: in silence looking down,
The Moon from cloudless ether sees
A Camp, and a beleaguered Town,
And Castle like a stately crown
On the steep rocks of winding Tees; —
And southward far, with moor between,
Hill-top, and flood, and forest green,
The bright Moon sees that valley small
Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall
A venerable image yields
Of quiet to the neighboring fields;
While from one pillared chimney breathes
The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths.
— The courts are hushed; — for timely sleep
The greyhounds to their kennel creep;
The peacock in the broad ash-tree
Aloft is roosted for the night,

He who in proud prosperity
Of colors manifold and bright
Walked round, affronting the daylight;
And higher still, above the bower
Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower
The hall-clock in the clear moonshine
With glittering finger points at nine.

Ah! who could think that sadness here
Hath any sway? or pain, or fear?
A soft and lulling sound is heard
Of streams inaudible by day;
The garden pool's dark surface, stirred
By the night insects in their play,
Breaks into dimples small and bright;
A thousand, thousand rings of light
That shape themselves and disappear
Almost as soon as seen: — and lo!
Not distant far, the milk-white Doe, —
The same who quietly was feeding
On the green herb, and nothing heeding,
When Francis, uttering to the Maid
His last words in the yew-tree shade,
Involved whate'er by love was brought
Out of his heart, or crossed his thought
Or chance presented to his eye,
In one sad sweep of destiny, —
The same fair Creature, who hath found
Her way into forbidden ground;
Where now, — within this spacious plot

For pleasure made, a goodly spot,
With lawns and beds of flowers, and shades
Of trellis-work in long arcades,
And cirque and crescent framed by wall
Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,
Converging walks, and fountains gay,
And terraces in trim array, —
Beneath yon cypress spiring high,
With pine and cedar spreading wide
Their darksome boughs on either side,
In open moonlight doth she lie ;
Happy as others of her kind,
That, far from human neighborhood,
Range unrestricted as the wind,
Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid
Emerging from a cedar shade
To open moonshine, where the Doe
Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;
Like a patch of April snow,
Upon a bed of herbage green,
Lingering in a woody glade
Or behind a rocky screen, —
Lonely relic ! which, if seen
By the shepherd, is passed by
With an inattentive eye.
Nor more regard doth she bestow
Upon the uncomplaining Doe,
Now couched at ease, though oft this day

Not unperplexed nor free from pain,
When she had tried, and tried in vain,
Approaching in her gentle way,
To win some look of love, or gain
Encouragement to sport or play;
Attempts which the heart-sick Maid
Rejected, or with slight repaid.

Yet Emily is soothed; — the breeze
Came fraught with kindly sympathies.
As she approached yon rustic shed
Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread
Along the walls and overhead,
The fragrance of the breathing flowers
Revived a memory of those hours
When here, in this remote alcove,
(While from the pendent woodbine came
Like odors, sweet as if the same,)
A fondly anxious Mother strove
To teach her salutary fears
And mysteries above her years.
Yes, she is soothed: an Image faint,
And yet not faint, a presence bright
Returns to her, — that blessèd Saint
Who with mild looks and language mild
Instructed here her darling Child,
While yet a prattler on the knee,
To worship in simplicity
The invisible God, and take for guide
The faith reformed and purified.

'T is flown, — the Vision, and the sense
Of that beguiling influence;
"But O thou Angel from above!
Mute Spirit of maternal love,
That stood'st before my eyes, more clear
Than ghosts are fabled to appear
Sent upon embassies of fear;
As thou thy presence hast to me
Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry
Descend on Francis; nor forbear
To greet him with a voice, and say:
'If hope be a rejected stay,
Do thou, my Christian Son, beware
Of that most lamentable snare,
The self-reliance of despair!'"

Then from within the embowered retreat
Where she had found a grateful seat
Perturbed she issues. She will go!
Herself will follow to the war,
And clasp her Father's knees; — ah, no!
She meets an insuperable bar,
The injunction by her Brother laid;
His parting charge, — but ill obeyed, —
That interdicted all debate,
All prayer for this cause or for that;
All efforts that would turn aside
The headstrong current of their fate;
Her duty is to stand and wait;
In resignation to abide

The shock, AND FINALLY SECURE
O'ER PAIN AND GRIEF A TRIUMPH PURE.
— She feels it, and her pangs are checked.
But now, as silently she paced
The turf, and thought by thought was chased,
Came one who, with sedate respect,
Approached, and, greeting her, thus spake;
"An old man's privilege I take:
Dark is the time, a woful day!
Dear daughter of affliction, say,
How can I serve you? point the way."

"Rights have you, and may well be bold:
You with my Father have grown old
In friendship, — strive, — for his sake go, —
Turn from us all the coming woe:
This would I beg; but on my mind
A passive stillness is enjoined.
On you, if room for mortal aid
Be left, is no restriction laid;
You not forbidden to recline
With hope upon the Will Divine."

"Hope," said the old Man, "Must abide
With all of us, whate'er betide.
In Craven's Wilds is many a den,
To shelter persecuted men:
Far under ground is many a cave,
Where they might lie as in the grave,
Until this storm hath ceased to rave:

Or let them cross the River Tweed,
And be at once from peril freed!"

"Ah, tempt me not!" she faintly sighed;
"I will not counsel nor exhort,
With my condition satisfied;
But you, at least, may make report
Of what befalls; — be this your task, —
This may be done; — 't is all I ask!"

She spake, and from the Lady's sight
The Sire, unconscious of his age,
Departed promptly as a Page
Bound on some errand of delight.
The noble Francis, wise as brave,
Thought he, may want not skill to save.
With hopes in tenderness concealed,
Unarmed he followed to the field;
Him will I seek: the insurgent Powers
Are now besieging Barnard's Towers, —
"Grant that the Moon which shines this night
May guide them in a prudent flight!"

But quick the turns of chance and change,
And knowledge has a narrow range;
Whence idle fears, and needless pain,
And wishes blind, and efforts vain. —
The Moon may shine, but cannot be
Their guide in flight, — already she
Hath witnessed their captivity.

She saw the desperate assault
Upon that hostile castle made; —
But dark and dismal is the vault
Where Norton and his sons are laid!
Disastrous issue! — he had said:
"This night yon faithless Towers must yield,
Or we for ever quit the field.
— Neville is utterly dismayed,
For promise fails of Howard's aid;
And Dacre to our call replies
That *he* is unprepared to rise.
My heart is sick; — this weary pause
Must needs be fatal to our cause.
The breach is open, — on the wall,
This night, the Banner shall be planted!"
— 'T was done: his Sons were with him, — all
They belt him round with hearts undaunted
And others follow: Sire and Son
Leap down into the court: "'T is won," —
They shout aloud, — but Heaven decreed
That with their joyful shout should close
The triumph of a desperate deed
Which struck with terror friends and foes!
The friend shrinks back, the foe recoils,
From Norton and his filial band;
But they, now caught within the toils,
Against a thousand cannot stand; —
The foe from numbers courage drew,
And overpowered that gallant few.
"A rescue for the Standard!" cried

The Father from within the walls;
But, see, the sacred Standard falls! —
Confusion through the Camp spread wide:
Some fled; and some their fears detained:
But ere the Moon had sunk to rest
In her pale chambers of the west,
Of that rash levy naught remained.

CANTO FIFTH.

High on a point of rugged ground
Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell,
Above the loftiest ridge or mound
Where foresters or shepherds dwell,
An edifice of warlike frame
Stands single, — Norton Tower its name;
It fronts all quarters, and looks round
O'er path and road, and plain and dell,
Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream,
Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent —
Though bleak and bare, and seldom free
As Pendle Hill or Pennygent
From wind, or frost, or vapors wet —
Had often heard the sound of glee
When there the youthful Nortons met,
To practise games and archery:
How proud and happy they! the crowd

Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud!
And from the scorching noontide sun,
From showers, or when the prize was won.
They to the Tower withdrew, and there
Would mirth run round, with generous fare
And the stern old Lord of Rylstone hall
Was happiest, proudest, of them all!

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,
Upon the height walks to and fro;
'T is well that she hath heard the tale,
Received the bitterness and woe:
For she *had* hoped, had hoped and feared,
Such right did feeble nature claim;
And oft her steps had hither steered,
Though not unconscious of self-blame;
For she her Brother's charge revered,
His farewell words; and by the same,
Yea by her Brother's very name,
Had, in her solitude, been cheered.

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood
That gray-haired man of gentle blood,
Who with her Father had grown old
In friendship; rival hunters they,
And fellow-warriors in their day;
To Rylstone he the tidings brought;
Then on this height the Maid had sought,
And, gently as he could, had told
The end of that dire Tragedy,
Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the Lady turned: "You said
That Francis lives, *he* is not dead?"

"Your noble Brother hath been spared;
To take his life they have not dared;
On him and on his high endeavor
The light of praise shall shine for ever!
Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain
His solitary course maintain;
Not vainly struggled in the might
Of duty, seeing with clear sight;
He was their comfort to the last,
Their joy till every pang was past.

"I witnessed when to York they came, —
What, Lady, if their feet were tied;
They might deserve a good man's blame;
But marks of infamy and shame, —
These were their triumph, these their pride;
Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,
'Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried,
'A Prisoner once, but now set free!
'T is well, for he the worst defied
Through force of natural piety;
He rose not in this quarrel, he,
For concord's sake and England's good,
Suit to his Brothers often made
With tears, and of his Father prayed, —
And when he had in vain withstood

Their purpose, then did he divide,
He parted from them ; but at their side
Now walks in unanimity.
Then peace to cruelty and scorn,
While to the prison they are borne,
Peace, peace to all indignity!'

"And so in Prison were they laid, —
O hear me, hear me, gentle Maid!
For I am come with power to bless,
By scattering gleams, through your distress,
Of a redeeming happiness.
Me did a reverent pity move
And privilege of ancient love;
And, in your service making bold,
Entrance I gained to that stronghold.

"Your Father gave me cordial greeting;
But to his purposes, that burned
Within him, instantly returned:
He was commanding and entreating,
And said, 'We need not stop, my Son!
Thoughts press, and time is hurrying on, —
And so to Francis he renewed
His words, more calmly thus pursued.

"'Might this our enterprise have sped,
Change wide and deep the Land had seen,
A renovation from the dead,
A spring-tide of immortal green:

The darksome altars would have blazed
Like stars when clouds are rolled away;
Salvation to all eyes that gazed,
Once more the Rood had been upraised
To spread its arms, and stand for aye.
Then, then, had I survived to see
New life in Bolton Priory;
The voice restored, the eye of Truth
Reopened that inspired my youth;
To see her in her pomp arrayed, —
This Banner (for such vow I made)
Should on the consecrated breast
Of that same Temple have found rest:
I would myself have hung it high,
Fit offering of glad victory!

"'A shadow of such thought remains,
To cheer this sad and pensive time;
A solemn fancy yet sustains
One feeble Being, — bids me climb
Even to the last, — one effort more
To attest my Faith, if not restore.

"'Hear, then,' said he, 'while I impart,
My Son, the last wish of my heart.
The Banner strive thou to regain;
And, if the endeavor prove not vain,
Bear it — to whom, if not to thee
Shall I this lonely thought consign? —
Bear it to Bolton Priory,

And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine,
To wither in the sun and breeze
'Mid those decaying sanctities.
There let at least the gift be laid,
The testimony there displayed;
Bold proof that with no selfish aim,
But for lost Faith and Christ's dear name,
I helmeted a brow, though white,
And took a place in all men's sight;
Yea, offered up this noble Brood,
This fair, unrivalled Brotherhood,
And turned away from thee, my Son!
And left — But be the rest unsaid,
The name untouched, the tear unshed; —
My wish is known, and I have done:
Now promise, grant this one request,
This dying prayer, and be thou blest!'

"Then Francis answered, 'Trust thy Son,
For, with God's will, it shall be done!'

"The pledge obtained, the solemn word
Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,
And Officers arose in state
To lead the prisoners to their fate.
They rose, — O wherefore should I fear
To tell, or, lady, you to hear?
They rose, — embraces none were given, —
They stood like trees when earth and heaven
Are calm; they knew each other's worth,

And reverently the Band went forth.
They met, when they had reached the door,
One with profane and harsh intent
Placed there,—that he might go before,
And, with that rueful Banner borne
Aloft, in sign of taunting scorn,
Conduct them to their punishment:
So cruel Sussex, unrestrained
By human feeling, had ordained.
The unhappy Banner Francis saw,
And, with a look of calm command
Inspiring universal awe,
He took it from the soldier's hand;
And all the people that stood round
Confirmed the deed in peace profound.
— High transport did the Father shed
Upon his Son,—and they were led,
Led on, and yielded up their breath;
Together died, a happy death!—
But Francis, soon as he had braved
That insult, and the Banner saved,
Athwart the unresisting tide
Of the spectators occupied
In admiration or dismay,
Bore instantly his Charge away."

These things, which thus had in the sight
And hearing passed of him who stood
With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,
In Rylstone's woful neighborhood,

He told; and oftentimes with voice
Of power to comfort or rejoice;
For deepest sorrows that aspire,
Go high, no transport ever higher.
"Yes, God is rich in mercy," said
The old Man to the silent Maid;
"Yet, Lady! shines, through this black night,
One star of aspect heavenly bright;
Your Brother lives, — he lives, — is come
Perhaps already to his home;
Then let us leave this dreary place."
She yielded, and with gentle pace,
Though without one uplifted look,
To Rylstone hall her way she took.

CANTO SIXTH.

Why comes not Francis? — From the doleful City
He fled, — and, in his flight, could hear
The death-sounds of the Minster bell:
That sullen stroke pronounced farewell
To Marmaduke, cut off from pity!
To Ambrose that! and then a knell
For him, the sweet, half-opened Flower!
For all, — all dying in one hour!
— Why comes not Francis? Thoughts of love
Should bear him to his Sister dear
With the fleet motion of a dove;

Yea, like a heavenly messenger
Of speediest wing should he appear.
Why comes he not? — for westward fast
Along the plain of York he past;
Reckless of what impels or leads,
Unchecked he hurries on; — nor heeds
The sorrow, through the Villages,
Spread by triumphant cruelties
Of vengeful military force,
And punishment without remorse.
He marked not, heard not, as he fled;
All but the suffering heart was dead
For him abandoned to blank awe,
To vacancy, and horror strong:
And the first object which he saw,
With conscious sight, as he swept along, —
It was the Banner in his hand!
He felt, — and made a sudden stand.

He looked about like one betrayed:
What hath he done? what promise made?
O weak, weak moment, to what end
Can such a vain oblation tend,
And he the Bearer? — Can he go,
Carrying this instrument of woe,
And find, find anywhere, a right
To excuse him in his Country's sight?
No; will not all men deem the change
A downward course, perverse and strange?
Here is it; — but how? when? must she,

The unoffending Emily,
Again this piteous object see?

Such conflict long did he maintain,
Nor liberty, nor rest could gain:
His own life into danger brought
By this sad burden, — even that thought,
Exciting self-suspicion strong,
Swayed the brave man to his wrong.
And how, — unless it were the sense
Of all-disposing Providence,
Its will unquestionably shown, —
How has the Banner clung so fast
To a palsied and unconscious hand;
Clung to the hand to which it passed
Without impediment? And why
But that Heaven's purpose might be known
Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,
No intervention, to withstand
Fulfilment of a Father's prayer
Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest
When all resentments were at rest,
And life in death laid the heart bare? —
Then, like a spectre sweeping by,
Rushed through his mind the prophecy
Of utter desolation made
To Emily in the yew-tree shade:
He sighed, submitting will and power
To the stern embrace of that grasping hour.
"No choice is left, the deed is mine, —

Dead are they, dead! — and I will go,
And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,
Will lay the Relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will
He went, and traversed plain and hill;
And up the vale of Wharf his way
Pursued; — and, at the dawn of day,
Attained a summit whence his eyes
Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.
There Francis for a moment's space
Made halt; — but hark! a noise behind
Of horsemen at an eager pace!
He heard, and with misgiving mind.
— 'T is Sir George Bowes who leads the Band
They come, by cruel Sussex sent;
Who, when the Nortons from the hand
Of death had drunk their punishment,
Bethought him, angry and ashamed,
How Francis, with the Banner claimed
As his own charge, had disappeared,
By all the standers-by revered.
His whole bold carriage (which had quelled
Thus far the Opposer, and repelled
All censure, enterprise so bright
That even bad men had vainly striven
Against that overcoming light)
Was then reviewed, and prompt word given,
That, to what place soever fled,
He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the height
Where Francis stood in open sight.
They hem him round, — "Behold the proof,"
They cried, "the Ensign in his hand!
He did not arm, he walked aloof!
For why? — to save his Father's land; —
Worst Traitor of them all is he,
A Traitor dark and cowardly!"

"I am no Traitor," Francis said,
"Though this unhappy freight I bear;
And must not part with. But beware; —
Err not, by hasty zeal misled,
Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,
Whose self-reproaches are too strong!"
At this he from the beaten road
Retreated towards a brake of thorn,
That like a place of vantage showed;
And there stood bravely, though forlorn.
In self-defence with warlike brow
He stood, — nor weaponless was now;
He from a Soldier's hand had snatched
A spear, — and, so protected, watched
The Assailants, turning round and round;
But from behind with treacherous wound
A Spearman brought him to the ground.
The guardian lance, as Francis fell,
Dropped from him; but his other hand
The Banner clenched; till, from out the Band
One, the most eager for the prize,

Rushed in; and — while, O grief to tell!
A glimmering sense still left, with eyes
Unclosed the noble Francis lay —
Seized it, as hunters seize their prey;
But not before the warm life-blood
Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,
The wounds the broidered Banner showed,
Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent as good!

Proudly the Horsemen bore away
The Standard; and where Francis lay
There was he left alone, unwept,
And for two days unnoticed slept.
For at that time bewildering fear
Possessed the country, far and near;
But on the third day, passing by,
One of the Norton Tenantry
Espied the uncovered Corse; the Man
Shrunk as he recognized the face,
And to the nearest homesteads ran
And called the people to the place.
— How desolate is Rylstone hall!
This was the instant thought of all;
And if the lonely Lady there
Should be, to her they cannot bear
This weight of anguish and despair.
So, when upon sad thoughts had prest
Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it best
That, if the Priest should yield assent,
And no one hinder their intent,

Then they, for Christian pity's sake,
In holy ground a grave would make;
And straightway buried he should be
In the Churchyard of the Priory.

Apart, some little space, was made
The grave where Francis must be laid.
In no confusion or neglect
This did they, but in pure respect
That he was born of gentle blood;
And that there was no neighborhood
Of kindred for him in that ground:
So to the Churchyard they are bound,
Bearing the body on a bier;
And psalms they sing, — a holy sound
That hill and vale with sadness hear.

But Emily hath raised her head,
And is again disquieted;
She must behold! — so many gone,
Where is the solitary one?
And forth from Rylstone hall stepped she. —
To seek her Brother forth she went,
And tremblingly her course she bent
Toward Bolton's ruined Priory.
She comes, and in the vale hath heard
The funeral dirge; — she sees the knot
Of people, sees them in one spot, —
And, darting like a wounded bird,
She reached the grave, and with her breast

Upon the ground received the rest, —
The consummation, the whole ruth
And sorrow of this final truth!

CANTO SEVENTH.

"Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick, — in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive
No soul to dream of."

THOU Spirit, whose angelic hand
Was to the harp a strong command,
Called the submissive strings to wake
In glory for this Maiden's sake,
Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled
To hide her poor, afflicted head?
What mighty forest in its gloom
Enfolds her? — is a rifted tomb
Within the wilderness her seat?
Some island which the wild waves beat, —
Is that the Sufferer's last retreat?
Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds
Its perilous front in mists and clouds?
High-climbing rock, low, sunless dale,
Sea, desert, what do these avail?
O take her anguish and her fears
Into a deep recess of years!

'T is done; — despoil and desolation
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown;
Pools, terraces, and walks are sown
With weeds; the bowers are overthrown,
Or have given way to slow mutation,
While in their ancient habitation
The Norton name hath been unknown.
The lordly Mansion of its pride
Is stripped; the ravage hath spread wide
Through park and field, a perishing
That mocks the gladness of the Spring!
And, with this silent gloom agreeing,
Appears a joyless human Being,
Of aspect such as if the waste
Were under her dominion placed.
Upon a primrose bank, her throne
Of quietness, she sits alone;
Among the ruins of a wood,
Erewhile a covert bright and green,
And where full many a brave tree stood,
That used to spread its boughs, and ring
With the sweet bird's carolling.
Behold her, like a virgin Queen,
Neglecting in imperial state
These outward images of fate.
And carrying inward a serene
And perfect sway, through many a thought
Of chance and change, that hath been brought
To the subjection of a holy,
Though stern and rigorous, melancholy!

The like authority, with grace
Of awfulness, is in her face,—
There hath she fixed it; yet it seems
To o'ershadow by no native right
That face, which cannot lose the gleams,
Lose utterly the tender gleams,
Of gentleness and meek delight,
And loving-kindness ever bright:
Such is her sovereign mien: — her dress
(A vest with woollen cincture tied,
A hood of mountain-wool undyed)
Is homely, — fashioned to express
A wandering Pilgrim's humbleness.

And she *hath* wandered, long and far.
Beneath the light of sun and star;
Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,
Driven forward like a withered leaf,
Yea, like a ship at random blown
To distant places and unknown.
But now she dares to seek a haven
Among her native wilds of Craven:
Hath seen again her Father's roof,
And put her fortitude to proof;
The mighty sorrow hath been borne,
And she is thoroughly forlorn:
Her soul doth in itself stand fast,
Sustained by memory of the past
And strength of Reason; held above
The infirmities of mortal love;

Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,
And awfully impenetrable.

And so — beneath a mouldered tree,
A self-surviving leafless oak
By unregarded age from stroke
Of ravage saved — sat Emily.
There did she rest, with head reclined,
Herself most like a stately flower
(Such have I seen) whom chance of birth
Hath separated from its kind,
To live and die in a shady bower,
Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,
A troop of deer came sweeping by;
And, suddenly, behold a wonder!
For one, among those rushing deer,
A single one, in mid-career,
Hath stopped, and fixed her large, full eye
Upon the Lady Emily;
A Doe most beautiful, clear white,
A radiant creature, silver-bright!

Thus checked, a little while it stayed,
A little thoughtful pause it made;
And then advanced with stealth-like pace,
Drew softly near her, and more near, —
Looked round, — but saw no cause for fear,
So to her feet the Creature came,

And laid its head upon her knee,
And looked into the Lady's face,
A look of pure benignity,
And fond, unclouded memory.
It is, thought Emily, the same,
The very Doe of other years! —
The pleading look the Lady viewed,
And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,
She melted into tears, —
A flood of tears, that flowed apace,
Upon the happy Creature's face.

O moment ever blest! O Pair
Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen care,
This was for you a precious greeting;
And may it prove a fruitful meeting!
Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe
Can she depart? can she forego
The Lady, once her playful peer,
And now her sainted Mistress dear?
And will not Emily receive
This lovely chronicler of things
Long past, delights and sorrowings?
Long Sufferer! will not she believe
The promise in that speaking face;
And welcome, as a gift of grace,
The saddest thought the Creature brings?

That day, the first of a reunion
Which was to teem with high communion,

That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together.
And when, ere fall of evening dew,
She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,
The White Doe tracked with faithful pace
The Lady to her dwelling-place;
That nook where, on paternal ground,
A habitation she had found,
The Master of whose humble board
Once owned her Father for his Lord;
A hut, by tufted trees defended,
Where Rylstone Brook with Wharf is blended

When Emily by morning light
Went forth, the Doe stood there in sight.
She shrunk: — with one frail shock of pain
Received and followed by a prayer,
She saw the Creature once again;
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear; —
But, wheresoever she looked round,
All now was trouble-haunted ground;
And therefore now she deems it good
Once more this restless neighborhood
To leave. — Unwooed, yet unforbidden,
The White Doe followed up the vale,
Up to another cottage, hidden
In the deep fork of Amerdale;
And there may Emily restore
Herself, in spots unseen before.
— Why tell of mossy rock, or tree,

By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,
Haunts of a strengthening amity
That calmed her, cheered, and fortified?
For she hath ventured now to read
Of time, and place, and thought, and deed, —
Endless history that lies
In her silent Follower's eyes;
Who with a power like human reason
Discerns the favorable season,
Skilled to approach or to retire, —
From looks conceiving her desire;
From look, deportment, voice, or mien,
That vary to the heart within.
If she too passionately wreathed
Her arms, or over-deeply breathed,
Walked quick or slowly, every mood
In its degree was understood;
Then well may their accord be true.
And kindliest intercourse ensue.
— Oh! surely 'twas a gentle rousing
When she by sudden glimpse espied
The White Doe on the mountain browsing,
Or in the meadow wandered wide!
How pleased, when down the Straggler sank
Beside her, on some sunny bank!
How soothed, when, in thick bower inclosed,
They, like a nested pair, reposed!
Fair Vision! when it crossed the Maid
Within some rocky cavern laid,
The dark cave's portal gliding by,

White as whitest cloud on high
Floating through the azure sky.
— What now is left for pain or fear?
That Presence, dearer and more dear
While they, side by side, were straying,
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,
Did now a very gladness yield
At morning to the dewy field,
And with a deeper peace endued
The hour of moonlight solitude.

With her Companion, in such frame
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came;
And, ranging through the wasted groves,
Received the memory of old loves.
Undisturbed and undistrest,
Into a soul which now was blest
With a soft spring-day of holy,
Mild, and grateful melancholy:
Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,
But by tender fancies brightened.

When the bells of Rylstone played
Their Sabbath music, — "God us ayde!"
That was the sound they seemed to speak;
Inscriptive legend which I ween
May on those holy bells be seen,
That legend and her Grandsire's name;
And oftentimes the Lady meek
Had in her childhood read the same;

Words which she slighted at that day;
But now, when such sad change was wrought,
And of that lonely name she thought,
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,
While she sat listening in the shade,
With vocal music, "God us ayde!"
And all the hills were glad to bear
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power;
But with the White Doe at her side,
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,
And thence look round her far and wide,
Her fate there measuring; — all is stilled, —
The weak one hath subdued her heart;
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,
Fulfilled, and she sustains her part!
But here her Brother's words have failed;
Here hath a milder doom prevailed;
That she, of him and all bereft,
Hath yet this faithful Partner left;
This one Associate, that disproves
His words, remains for her, and loves.
If tears are shed, they do not fall
For loss of him, — for one, or all;
Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep,
Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep;
A few tears down her cheek descend
For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,
And bless for both this savage spot,
Which Emily doth sacred hold
For reasons dear and manifold; —
Here hath she, here before her sight,
Close to the summit of this height,
The grassy, rock-encircled Pound
In which the Creature first was found.
So beautiful the timid Thrall
(A spotless Youngling white as foam)
Her youngest Brother brought it home;
The youngest, then a lusty boy,
Bore it, or led, to Rylstone hall
With heart brimful of pride and joy!

But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,
On favoring nights, she loved to go;
There ranged through cloister, court, and aisle
Attended by the soft-paced Doe;
Nor feared she in the still moonshine
To look upon Saint Mary's shrine;
Nor on the lonely turf that showed
Where Francis slept in his last abode.
For that she came; there oft she sat
Forlorn, but not disconsolate:
And when she from the abyss returned
Of thought, she neither shrunk nor mourned
Was happy that she lived to greet
Her mute Companion, as it lay
In love and pity at her feet;

How happy in its turn to meet
The recognition! the mild glance
Beamed from that gracious countenance;
Communication, like the ray
Of a new morning, to the nature
And prospects of the inferior Creature!

A mortal Song we sing, by dower
Encouraged of celestial power;
Power which the viewless Spirit shed
By whom we were first visited;
Whose voice we heard, whose hand and wings
Swept like a breeze the conscious strings
When, left in solitude, erewhile
We stood before this ruined Pile,
And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,
Sang in this Presence kindred themes;
Distress and desolation spread
Through human hearts, and pleasure dead, —
Dead, but to live again on earth,
A second and yet nobler birth;
Dire overthrow, and yet how high
The reascent in sanctity!
From fair to fairer; day by day
A more divine and loftier way!
Even such this blessèd Pilgrim trod,
By sorrow lifted towards her God;
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed mortality.
Her own thoughts loved she and could bend

A dear look to her lowly Friend,
There stopped; her thirst was satisfied
With what this innocent spring supplied
Her sanction inwardly she bore,
And stood apart from human cares:
But to the world returned no more,
Although with no unwilling mind
Help did she give at need, and joined
The Wharfdale peasants in their prayers.
At length, thus faintly, faintly tied
To earth, she was set free, and died.
Thy soul, exalted Emily,
Maid of the blasted family,
Rose to the God from whom it came!
— In Rylstone church her mortal frame
Was buried, by her Mother's side.

Most glorious sunset! and a ray
Survives — the twilight of this day —
In that fair Creature whom the fields
Support, and whom the forest shields;
Who, having filled a holy place,
Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace;
And bears a memory and a mind
Raised far above the law of kind;
Haunting the spots with lonely cheer
Which her dear Mistress once held dear:
Loves most what Emily loved most, —
The inclosure of this churchyard ground;
Here wanders like a gliding ghost,

And every Sabbath here is found;
Comes with the people when the bells
Are heard among the moorland dells,
Finds entrance through yon arch, where way
Lies open on the Sabbath-day;
Here walks amid the mournful waste
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,
And floors encumbered with rich show
Of fret-work imagery laid low;
Paces softly, or makes halt,
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault;
By plate of monumental brass
Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,
And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave:
But chiefly by that single grave,
That one sequestered hillock green,
The pensive visitant is seen.
There doth the gentle Creature lie
With those adversities unmoved;
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
In their benignity approved!
And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say,—
"Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,
But Daughter of the Eternal Prime!

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

IN SERIES.

PART I.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION.

"A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies
Profounder Tracts, and by a blest surprise
Convert delight into a Sacrifice."

I.

INTRODUCTION.

I, WHO accompanied with faithful pace
Cerulean Duddon from its cloud-fed spring,
And loved with spirit ruled by his to sing
Of mountain-quiet and boon nature's grace, —
I, who essayed the nobler Stream to trace
Of Liberty, and smote the plausive string
Till the checked torrent, proudly triumphing,
Won for herself a lasting resting-place, —

Now seek upon the heights of Time the source
Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are found
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that have crowned
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless force;
And, for delight of him who tracks its course,
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

II.

CONJECTURES.

IF there be prophets on whose spirits rest
Past things, revealed like future, they can tell
What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred well
Of Christian Faith, this savage Island blessed
With its first bounty. Wandering through the west,
Did holy Paul* a while in Britain dwell,
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,
And with dread signs the nascent Stream invest?
Or he, whose bonds dropped off, whose prison doors
Flew open, by an Angel's voice unbarred?
Or some of humbler name, to these wild shores
Storm-driven, who, having seen the cup of woe
Pass from their Master, sojourned here to guard
The precious Current they had taught to flow?

* See Note.

III.

TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS.

SCREAMS round the Arch-druid's brow the sea-
mew,* — white
As Menai's foam; and toward the mystic ring
Where Augurs stand, the Future questioning,
Slowly the cormorant aims her heavy flight,
Portending ruin to each baleful rite,
That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er
Diluvian truths, and patriarchal lore.
Haughty the Bard: can these meek doctrines blight
His transports? wither his heroic strains?
But all shall be fulfilled; — the Julian spear
A way first opened; and, with Roman chains,
The tidings come of Jesus crucified;
They come, — they spread, — the weak, the suffer-
ing, hear;
Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.

IV.

DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION.

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy road,
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of fire

* This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen.

And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,
From every sympathy that Man bestowed!
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to God,
Ancient of days! that to the eternal Sire,
These jealous Ministers of law aspire,
As to the one sole fount whence wisdom flowed,
Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,
As if with prescience of the coming storm,
That intimation when the stars were shaped;
And still, 'mid yon thick woods, the primal truth
Glimmers through many a superstitious form
That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

V.

UNCERTAINTY.

DARKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we are lost
On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian coves,
Or where the solitary shepherd roves
Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost
Of Time and shadows of Tradition crost;
And where the boatman of the Western Isles
Slackens his course, to mark those holy piles
Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.
Nor these, nor monuments of eldest name,
Nor Taliesin's unforgotten lays,
Nor characters of Greek or Roman fame,
To an unquestionable Source have led;
Enough, if eyes, that sought the fountain-head
In vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

VI.

PERSECUTION.

Lament! for Diocletian's fiery sword
Works busy as the lightning; but instinct
With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon linked,
Which God's ethereal store-houses afford:
Against the Followers of the incarnate Lord
It rages; — some are smitten in the field, —
Some pierced to the heart through the ineffectual shield
Of sacred home; — with pomp are others gored,
And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban tried,
England's first Martyr, whom no threats could shake;
Self-offered victim, for his friend he died,
And for the faith; nor shall his name forsake
That Hill, whose flowery platform seems to rise
By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice.*

VII.

RECOVERY.

As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds regain
Their cheerfulness, and busily retrim
Their nests, or chant a gratulating hymn
To the blue ether and bespangled plain;

* See Note.

Even so, in many a reconstructed fane,
Have the survivors of this storm renewed
Their holy rites with vocal gratitude:
And solemn ceremonials they ordain
To celebrate their great deliverance;
Most feelingly instructed 'mid their fear,—
That persecution, blind with rage extreme,
May not the less, through Heaven's mild countenance,
Even in her own despite, both feed and cheer;
For all things are less dreadful than they seem.

VIII.

TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS.

Watch, and be firm! for soul-subduing vice,
Heart-killing luxury, on your steps await.
Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,
And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,
Their radiance through the woods, may yet suffice
To sap your hardy virtue, and abate
Your love of Him upon whose forehead sate
The crown of thorns; whose life-blood flowed, the price
Of your redemption. Shun the insidious arts
That Rome provides, less dreading from her frown
Than from her wily praise, her peaceful gown,
Language, and letters;— these, though fondly viewed

As humanizing graces, are but parts
And instruments of deadliest servitude!

IX.

DISSENSIONS.

That heresies should strike (if truth be scanned
Presumptuously) their roots both wide and deep
Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.
Lo! Discord at the altar dares to stand,
Uplifting toward high Heaven her fiery brand,
A cherished Priestess of the new-baptized!
But chastisement shall follow peace despised.
The Pictish cloud darkens the enervate land
By Rome abandoned; vain are suppliant cries,
And prayers that would undo her forced farewell
For she returns not. — Awed by her own knell,
She casts the Britons upon strange Allies,
Soon to become more dreaded enemies
Than heartless misery called them to repel.

X.

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST THE BARBARIANS.

Rise! — they *have* risen: of brave Aneurin ask
How they have scourged old foes, perfidious friends!
The Spirit of Caractacus descends
Upon the Patriots, animates their task;
Amazement runs before the towering casque
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy field

The Virgin sculptured on his Christian shield: —
Stretched in the sunny light of victory bask
The Host that followed Urien as he strode
O'er heaps of slain; — from Cambrian wood and moss
Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross.
Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's still abode,
Rush on the fight, to harps preferring swords,
And everlasting deeds to burning words!

XI.

SAXON CONQUEST.

Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallelujahs * tost from hill to hill,
For instant victory. But Heaven's high will
Permits a second and a darker shade
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,
The Relics of the sword flee to the mountains:
O wretched Land! whose tears have flowed like fountains;
Whose arts and honors in the dust are laid
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of Earth;
Who, as the fields and woods have given them birth,
Will build their savage fortunes only there;
Content, if foss, and barrow, and the girth
Of long-drawn rampart, witness what they were.

* See Note.

XII.

MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR.*

The oppression of the tumult, — wrath and scorn. —
The tribulation, — and the gleaming blades, —
Such is the impetuous spirit that pervades
The song of Taliesin ; — Ours shall mourn
The *unarmed* Host who by their prayers would turn
The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard the store
Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,
And Christian monuments, that now must burn
To senseless ashes. Mark! how all things swerve
From their known course, or vanish like a dream
Another language spreads from coast to coast;
Only perchance some melancholy Stream
And some indignant Hills old names preserve,
When laws, and creeds, and people all are lost!

XIII.

CASUAL INCITEMENT.

A BRIGHT-HAIRED company of youthful slaves,
Beautiful strangers, stand within the pale
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,
Where Tiber's stream the Immortal City laves:
ANGLI by name; and not an ANGEL waves

* See Note.

His wing who could seem lovelier to man's eye
Than they appear to holy Gregory;
Who, having learnt that name, salvation craves
For them, and for their Land. The earnest Sire,
His questions urging, feels, in slender ties
Of chiming sound, commanding sympathies;
De-irians, — he would save them from God's Ire;
Subjects of Saxon Ælla, they shall sing
Glad Halle-lujahs to the Eternal King!

XIV.

GLAD TIDINGS.

For ever hallowed be this morning fair,
Blest be the unconscious shore on which ye tread,
And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead
Of martial banner, in procession bear;
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,
The pictured Saviour! — By Augustin led,
They come, — and onward travel without dread,
Chanting in barbarous ears a tuneful prayer, —
Sung for themselves, and those whom they would free!
Rich conquest waits them: — the tempestuous sea
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high,
And heeded not the voice of clashing swords,
These good men humble by a few bare words,
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

XV.

PAULINUS.*

But, to remote Northumbria's royal Hall,
Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the school
Of sorrow, still maintains a heathen rule,
Who comes with functions apostolical?
Mark him, of shoulders curved, and stature tall,
Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre cheek,
His prominent feature like an eagle's beak;
A Man whose aspect doth at once appall
And strike with reverence. The Monarch leans
Toward the pure truths this Delegate propounds,
Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds
With careful hesitation, — then convenes
A synod of his Councillors: — give ear,
And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear!

XVI.

PERSUASION.

"Man's life is like a Sparrow, mighty King!
That — while at banquet with your Chiefs you
Housed near a blazing fire — is seen to flit
Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,
Here did it enter; there, on hasty wing,
Flies out, and passes on from cold to cold;

* See Note.

But whence it came we know not, nor behold
Whither it goes. Even such, that transient Thing,
The human Soul; not utterly unknown
While in the Body lodged, her warm abode;
But from what world she came, what woe or weal
On her departure waits, no tongue hath shown;
This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,
His be a welcome cordially bestowed!" *

XVII.

CONVERSION.

PROMPT transformation works the novel Lore;
The Council closed, the Priest in full career
Rides forth, an armèd man, and hurls a spear
To desecrate the Fane which heretofore
He served in folly. Woden falls, and Thor
Is overturned; the mace, in battle heaved
(So might they dream) till victory was achieved,
Drops, and the God himself is seen no more.
Temple and Altar sink, to hide their shame
Amid oblivious weeds. "*O come to me,*
Ye heavy laden!" such the inviting voice
Heard near fresh streams; † and thousands, who rejoice
In the new Rite, — the pledge of sanctity,
Shall, by regenerate life, the promise claim.

* See Note. † See Note.

XVIII.

APOLOGY.

Nor scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend
The Soul's eternal interests to promote:
Death, darkness, danger, are our natural lot;
And evil Spirits *may* our walk attend,
For aught the wisest know or comprehend;
Then be *good* Spirits free to breathe a note
Of elevation; let their odors float
Around these Converts; and their glories blend,
The midnight stars outshining, or the blaze
Of the noonday. Nor doubt that golden cords
Of good works, mingling with the visions, raise
The Soul to purer worlds: and *who* the line
Shall draw, the limits of the power define,
That even imperfect faith to man affords?

XIX.

PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY.*

How beautiful your presence, how benign,
Servants of God! who not a thought will share
With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!
Such Priest, when service worthy of his care

* See Note.

Has called him forth to breathe the common air,
Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine
Descended: — happy are the eyes that meet
The Apparition; evil thoughts are stayed
At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat
A benediction from his voice or hand;
Whence grace, through which the heart can understand,
And vows, that bind the will, in silence made.

XX.

OTHER INFLUENCES.

Ah, when the Body, round which in love we clung,
Is chilled by death, does mutual service fail?
Is tender pity then of no avail?
Are intercessions of the fervent tongue
A waste of hope? — From this sad source have sprung
Rites that console the Spirit, under grief
Which ill can brook more rational relief:
Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and dirges sung
For Souls whose doom is fixed! The way is smooth
For Power that travels with the human heart:
Confession ministers the pang to soothe
In him who at the ghost of guilt doth start.
Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,
Of your own mighty instruments beware!

XXI.

SECLUSION.

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished, at his side
A bead-roll, in his hand a claspèd book,
Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's crook,
The war-worn Chieftain quits the world, to hide
His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide
In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell
In soft repose he comes. Within his cell,
Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent hour
Do penitential cogitations cling;
Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they twine
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine;
Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth they bring,
For recompense, — their own perennial bower.

XXII.

CONTINUED.

METHINKS that to some vacant hermitage
My feet would rather turn, — to some dry nook
Scooped out of living rock, and near a brook
Hurled down a mountain-cove from stage to stage,
Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling rage
In the soft heaven of a translucent pool;
Thence creeping under sylvan arches cool,
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equipage

Would elevate my dreams. A beechen bowl,
A maple dish, my furniture should be;
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed; the hooting owl
My night-watch: nor should e'er the crested fowl
From thorp or vill his matins sound for me,
Tired of the world and all its industry.

XXIII.

REPROOF.

But what if one, through grove or flowery mead
Indulging thus at will the creeping feet
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet
Thy hovering Shade, O venerable Bede!
The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat
Of learning, where thou heard'st the billows beat
On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the debt
Imposed on human kind, must first forget
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use
Of a long life; and, in the hour of death,
The last dear service of thy passing breath! *

* He expired dictating the last words of a translation of St. John's Gospel.

XXIV.

SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND SHADES OF THE RELIGION.

By such examples moved to unbought pains,
The people work like congregated bees;
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains
From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely rains
Or needful sunshine; prosperous enterprise,
Justice and peace: — bold faith! yet also rise
The sacred Structures for less doubtful gains.
The Sensual think with reverence of the palms
Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond the grave
If penance be redeemable, thence alms
Flow to the poor, and freedom to the slave;
And if full oft the Sanctuary save
Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

XXV.

MISSIONS AND TRAVELS.

Not sedentary all: there are who roam
To scatter seeds of life on barbarous shores;
Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn floors
To seek the general mart of Christendom;
Whence they, like richly laden merchants, come
To their beloved cells: — or shall we say

That, like the Red-cross Knight, they urge their way,
To lead in memorable triumph home
Truth, their immortal Una? Babylon,
Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,
Nor leaves her Speech one word to aid the sigh
That would lament her; — Memphis, Tyre, are gone
With all their Arts; — but classic lore glides on,
By these Religious saved for all posterity.

XXVI.

ALFRED.

Behold a pupil of the monkish gown,
The pious Alfred, King to Justice dear!
Lord of the harp and liberating spear;
Mirror of Princes! Indigent Renown
Might range the starry ether for a crown
Equal to *his* deserts, who like a year
Pours forth his bounty, like a day doth cheer,
And awes like night with mercy-tempered frown.
Ease from this noble miser of his time
No moment steals; pain narrows not his cares.*
Though small his kingdom as a spark or gem
Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,
And Christian India, through her wide-spread clime,
In sacred converse gifts with Alfred shares.

* See Note.

XXVII.

HIS DESCENDANTS.

When thy great soul was freed from mortal chains
Darling of England! many a bitter shower
Fell on thy tomb; but emulative power
Flowed in thy line through undegenerate veins.
The Race of Alfred covet glorious pains
When dangers threaten, dangers ever new!
Black tempests bursting, blacker still in view!
But manly sovereignty its hold retains;
The root sincere, the branches bold to strive
With the fierce tempest, while, within the round
Of their protection, gentle virtues thrive;
As oft, 'mid some green plot of open ground,
Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,
The fostered hyacinths spread their purple bloom

XXVIII.

INFLUENCE ABUSED.

Urged by Ambition, who with subtlest skill
Changes her means, the Enthusiast as a dupe
Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,
And turn the instruments of good to ill,
Moulding the credulous people to his will.
Such Dunstan: — from its Benedictine coop
Issues the master Mind, at whose fell swoop

The chaste affections tremble to fulfil
Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,
The Might of spiritual sway! his thoughts, his dreams,
Do in the supernatural world abide:
So vaunt a throng of Followers, filled with pride
In what they see of virtues pushed to extremes,
And sorceries of talent misapplied.

XXIX.

DANISH CONQUESTS.

Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey! *
Dissension, checking arms that would restrain
The incessant Rovers of the Northern main,
Helps to restore and spread a Pagan sway:
But Gospel-truth is potent to allay
Fierceness and rage; and soon the cruel Dane
Feels, through the influence of her gentle reign,
His native superstitions melt away.
Thus, often, when thick gloom the east o'ershrouds
The full-orbed Moon, slow climbing, doth appear
Silently to consume the heavy clouds;
How no one can resolve; but every eye
Around her sees, while air is hushed, a clear
And widening circuit of ethereal sky.

* See Note.

XXX.

CANUTE.

A PLEASANT music floats along the Mere,
From Monks in Ely chanting service high,
While-as Canùte the King is rowing by:
"My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King, "draw near,
That we the sweet song of the Monks may hear!"*
He listens (all past conquests and all schemes
Of future vanishing like empty dreams)
Heart-touched, and haply not without a tear.
The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir is still,
While his free Barge skims the smooth flood along
Gives to that rapture an accordant Rhyme.*
O suffering Earth! be thankful; sternest clime
And rudest age are subject to the thrill
Of heaven-descended Piety and song.

XXXI.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THE woman-hearted Confessor prepares
The evanescence of the Saxon line.
Hark! 't is the tolling Curfew! — the stars shine
But of the lights that cherish household cares
And festive gladness, burns not one that dares

* Which is still extant.

To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,
Emblem and instrument, from Thames to Tyne,
Of force that daunts, and cunning that ensnares!
Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell,
That quench, from hut to palace, lamps and fires,
Touch not the tapers of the sacred choirs;
Even so a thraldom, studious to expel
Old laws, and ancient customs to derange,
To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal change.

XXXII.

Coldly we spake. The Saxons, overpowered
By wrong triumphant through its own excess,
From fields laid waste, from house and home devoured
By flames, look up to heaven, and crave redress
From God's eternal justice. Pitiless
Though men be, there are angels that can feel
For wounds that death alone has power to heal,
For penitent guilt, and innocent distress.
And has a Champion risen in arms to try
His Country's virtue, fought, and breathes no more;
Him in their hearts the people canonize;
And far above the mine's most precious ore
The least small pittance of bare mould they prize
Scooped from the sacred earth where his dear relics lie.

XXXIII.

THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT.

"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "profaneness flow
From Nazareth, source of Christian piety,
From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of Agony
And glorified ascension? Warriors, go,
With prayers and blessings we your path will sow;
Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye
Have chased far off by righteous victory
These sons of Amalek, or laid them low!" —
"GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly cry;
Shout which the enraptured multitude astounds!
The Council-roof and Clermont's towers reply; —
"God willeth it," from hill to hill rebounds,
And, in awe-stricken Countries far and nigh,
Through "Nature's hollow arch" that voice resounds.*

XXXIV.

CRUSADES.

THE turbaned Race are poured in thickening swarms
Along the west; though driven from Aquitaine,
The Crescent glitters on the towers of Spain;
And soft Italia feels renewed alarms:

* The decision of this Council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

The cimeter, that yields not to the charms
Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will disdain;
Not long (that crossed) would Grecian hills detain
Their tents, and check the current of their arms.
Then blame not those who, by the mightiest lever
Known to the moral world, Imagination,
Upheave, so seems it, from her natural station
All Christendom: — they sweep along (was never
So huge a host!) to tear from the Unbeliever
The precious Tomb, their haven of salvation.

XXXV.

RICHARD I.

Redoubted King, of courage leonine,
I mark thee, Richard! urgent to equip
Thy warlike person with the staff and scrip;
I watch thee sailing o'er the midland brine;
In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride decline
Her blushing cheek, love-vows upon her lip,
And see love-emblems streaming from thy ship,
As thence she holds her way to Palestine.
My Song, a fearless homager, would attend
Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves the press
Of war, but duty summons her away
To tell — how, finding in the rash distress
Of those Enthusiasts a subservient friend,
To giddier heights hath clomb the Papal sway.

XXXVI.

AN INTERDICT.

Realms quake by turns: proud Arbitress of grace,
The Church, by mandate shadowing forth the power
She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,
Closes the gates of every sacred place.
Straight from the sun and tainted air's embrace
All sacred things are covered: cheerful morn
Grows sad as night, — no seemly garb is worn,
Nor is a face allowed to meet a face
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells are dumb
Ditches are graves, — funeral rites denied;
And in the churchyard he must take his bride
Who dares be wedded! Fancies thickly come
Into the pensive heart ill fortified,
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.

XXXVII.

PAPAL ABUSES.

As with the Stream our voyage we pursue,
The gross materials of this world present
A marvellous study of wild accident;
Uncouth proximities of old and new;
And bold transfigurations, more untrue
(As might be deemed) to disciplined intent

Than aught the sky's fantastic element,
When most fantastic, offers to the view.
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's shrine?
Lo! John self-stripped of his insignia: — crown,
Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid down
At a proud Legate's feet! The spears that line
Baronial halls the opprobrious insult feel;
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVIII.

SCENE IN VENICE.

Black Demons hovering o'er his mitred head,
To Cæsar's successor the Pontiff spake:
"Ere I absolve thee, stoop! that on thy neck
Levelled with earth this foot of mine may tread."
Then he, who to the altar had been led,
He whose strong arm the Orient could not check,
He who had held the Soldan at his beck,
Stooped, of all glory disinherited,
And even the common dignity of man! —
Amazement strikes the crowd: while many turn
Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban
From outraged Nature; but the sense of most
In abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXIX.

PAPAL DOMINION.

Unless to Peter's Chair the viewless wind
Must come and ask permission when to blow,
What further empire would it have? for now
A ghostly Domination, unconfined
As that by dreaming Bards to Love assigned,
Sits there in sober truth, — to raise the low,
Perplex the wise, the strong to overthrow;
Through earth and heaven to bind and to unbind! —
Resist, — the thunder quails thee! — crouch, — rebuff
Shall be thy recompense! from land to land
The ancient thrones of Christendom are stuff
For occupation of a magic wand,
And 'tis the Pope that wields it: — whether rough
Or smooth his front, our world is in his hand!

PART II.

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

I.

How soon, alas! did Man, created pure,
By Angels guarded, deviate from the line

Prescribed to duty! — woful forfeiture
He made by wilful breach of law divine.
With like perverseness did the Church abiure
Obedience to her Lord, and haste to twine,
'Mid Heaven-born flowers that shall for ave endure,
Weeds on whose front the world had fixed her sign.
O Man! if with thy trials thus it fares,
If good can smooth the way to evil choice
From all rash censure be the mind kept free;
He only judges right who weighs, compares,
And, in the sternest sentence which his voice
Pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

II.

From false assumption rose, and, fondly hailed
By superstition, spread the Papal power;
Yet do not deem the Autocracy prevailed
Thus only, even in error's darkest hour.
She daunts, forth-thundering from her spiritual tower,
Brute rapine, or with gentle lure she tames.
Justice and Peace through her uphold their claims;
And Chastity finds many a sheltering bower.
Realm there is none that, if controlled or swayed
By her commands, partakes not, in degree,
Of good, o'er manners, arts, and arms diffused
Yes, to thy domination Roman See,
Though miserably, oft monstrously, abused
By blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

III.

CISTERTIAN MONASTERY.

"*Here Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall,*
More promptly rises, walks with stricter heed,
More safely rests, dies happier, is freed
Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains withal
A brighter crown." * — On yon Cistertian wall
That confident assurance may be read;
And, to like shelter, from the world have fled
Increasing multitudes. The potent call
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's desires;
Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant knee
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,
A gentler life spreads round the holy spires;
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste retires,
And aëry harvests crown the fertile lea.

IV.

Deplorable his lot who tills the ground,
His whole life long tills it, with heartless toil
Of villain-service, passing with the soil
To each new Master, like a steer or hound.
Or like a rooted tree, or stone earth-bound;
But mark how gladly, through their own domains
The Monks relax or break these iron chains;

* See Note.

While Mercy, uttering, through their voice, a sound
Echoed in Heaven, cries out, "Ye Chiefs, abate
These legalized oppressions! Man, whose name
And nature God disdained not, — Man, whose soul
Christ died for, — cannot forfeit his high claim
To live and move exempt from all control
Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate!"

V.

MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN.

Record we too, with just and faithful pen,
That many hooded Cenobites there are,
Who in their private cells have yet a care
Of public quiet; unambitious Men,
Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken;
Whose fervent exhortations from afar
Move Princes to their duty, peace or war;
And ofttimes in the most forbidding den
Of solitude, with love of science strong,
How patiently the yoke of thought they bear!
How subtly glide its finest threads along!
Spirits that crowd the intellectual sphere
With mazy boundaries, as the astronomer
With orb and cycle girds the starry throng.

VI.

OTHER BENEFITS.

And, not in vain embodied to the sight,
Religion finds even in the stern retreat
Of feudal sway her own appropriate seat;
From the collegiate pomps on Windsor's height
Down to the humbler altar, which the Knight
And his Retainers of the embattled hall
Seek in domestic oratory small,
For prayer in stillness, or the chanted rite;
Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted round,
Who teach the intrepid guardians of the place —
Hourly exposed to death, with famine worn,
And suffering under many a perilous wound —
How sad would be their durance, if forlorn
Of offices dispensing heavenly grace!

VII.

CONTINUED.

And what melodious sounds at times prevail!
And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam
Pours on the surface of the turbid Stream!
What heart-felt fragrance mingles with the gale
That swells the bosom of our passing sail!
For where, but on *this* River's margin, blow
Those flowers of chivalry, to bind the brow

Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not fail? —
Fair Court of Edward! wonder of the world
I see a matchless blazonry unfurled
Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love;
And meekness tempering honorable pride;
The lamb is couching by the lion's side,
And near the flame-eyed eagle sits the dove.

VIII.

CRUSADERS.

Furl we the sails, and pass with tardy oars
Through these bright regions, casting many glance
Upon the dream-like issues, — the romance
Of many-colored life, that Fortune pours
Round the Crusaders, till on distant shores
Their labors end; or they return to lie,
The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,
Devoutly stretched upon their chancel floors.
Am I deceived? or is their requiem chanted
By voices never mute, when Heaven unties
Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies;
Requiem which Earth takes up with voice undaunted,
When she would tell how Brave, and Good, and Wise,
For their high guerdon not in vain have panted!

IX.

As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest
While from the Papal Unity there came,
What feebler means had failed to give, one aim
Diffused through all the regions of the West;
So does her Unity its power attest
By works of Art, that shed, on the outward frame
Of worship, glory and grace, which who shall blame
That ever looked to heaven for final rest?
Hail, countless Temples! that so well befit
Your ministry; that, as ye rise and take
Form, spirit, and character from holy writ,
Give to devotion, wheresoe'er awake,
Pinions of high and higher sweep, and make
The unconverted soul with awe submit.

X.

Where long and deeply hath been fixed the root
In the blest soil of Gospel truth, the Tree
(Blighted or scathed though many branches be,
Put forth to wither, many a hopeful shoot)
Can never cease to bear celestial fruit.
Witness the Church that ofttimes, with effect
Dear to the saints, strives earnestly to eject
Her bane, her vital energies recruit.
Lamenting, do not hopelessly repine
When such good work is doomed to be undone,
The conquests lost that were so hardly won:—

All promises vouchsafed by Heaven will shine
In light confirmed while years their course shall run,
Confirmed alike in progress and decline.

XI.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

ENOUGH! for see, with dim association
The tapers burn; the odorous incense feeds
A greedy flame; the pompous Mass proceeds;
The Priest bestows the appointed consecration;
And, while the HOST is raised, its elevation
An awe and supernatural horror breeds;
And all the people bow their heads, like reeds
To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.
This Valdo brooks not. On the banks of Rhone
He taught, till persecution chased him thence,
To adore the Invisible, and him alone.
Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,
'Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy throne,
From rites that trample upon soul and sense.

XII.

THE VAUDOIS.

BUT whence came they who for the Saviour Lord
Have long borne witness as the Scriptures teach?—
Ages ere Valdo raised his voice to preach

In Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,
Their fugitive Progenitors explored
Subalpine vales, in quest of safe retreats,
Where that pure Church survives, though summer heats
Open a passage to the Romish sword,
Far as it dares to follow. Herbs self-sown,
And fruitage gathered from the chestnut wood,
Nourish the sufferers then; and mists, that brood
O'er chasms with new-fallen obstacles bestrown,
Protect them; and the eternal snow that daunts
Aliens, is God's good winter for their haunts.

XIII.

Praised be the Rivers, from their mountain springs
Shouting to Freedom, "Plant thy banners here!"
To harassed Piety, "Dismiss thy fear,
And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled wings!"
Nor be unthanked their final lingerings, —
Silent, but not to high-souled Passion's ear, —
Mid reedy fens wide-spread and marshes drear,
Their own creation. Such glad welcomings
As Po was heard to give where Venice rose
Hailed from aloft those Heirs of truth divine
Who near his fountains sought obscure repose,
Yet came prepared as glorious lights to shine,
Should that be needed for their sacred Charge;
Blest Prisoners they, whose spirits were at large

XIV.

WALDENSES.

THOSE had given earliest notice, as the lark
Springs from the ground the morn to gratulate;
Or rather rose the day to antedate,
By striking out a solitary spark,
When all the world with midnight gloom was dark. —
Then followed the Waldensian bands, whom Hate
In vain endeavors to exterminate,
Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark: *
But they desist not; — and the sacred fire,
Rekindled thus, from dens and savage woods
Moves, handed on with never-ceasing care,
Through courts, through camps, o'er limitary floods;
Nor lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share
Of the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

XV.

ARCHBISHOP CHICHELY TO HENRY V.

"WHAT beast in wilderness or cultured field
The lively beauty of the leopard shows?
What flower in meadow-ground or garden grows
That to the towering lily doth not yield?
Let both meet only on thy royal shield!

* See Note.

Go forth, great King! claim what thy birth bestows;
Conquer the Gallic lily which thy foes
Dare to usurp; — thou hast a sword to wield,
And Heaven will crown the right." — The mitred Sire
Thus spake, — and lo! a Fleet, for Gaul addrest,
Ploughs her bold course across the wondering seas;
For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast
Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire,
But one that leaps to meet the fanning breeze.

XVI.

WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER.

Thus is the storm abated by the craft
Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect
The Church, whose power hath recently been checked,
Whose monstrous riches threatened. So the shaft
Of victory mounts high, and blood is quaffed
In fields that rival Cressy and Poictiers, —
Pride to be washed away by bitter tears!
For deep as hell itself, the avenging draught
Of civil slaughter. Yet, while temporal power
Is by these shocks exhausted, spiritual truth
Maintains the else endangered gift of life;
Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;
And, under cover of this woful strife,
Gathers unblighted strength from hour to hour.

XVII

WICLIFFE.

Once more the Church is seized with sudden fear,
And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed:
Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed
And flung into the brook that travels near;
Forthwith, that ancient Voice which Streams can hear
Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon the wind,
Though seldom heard by busy human kind):
"As thou these ashes, little Brook! wilt bear
Into the Avon, Avon to the tide
Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
Into main Ocean they, this deed accurst
An emblem yields to friends and enemies
How the bold Teacher's Doctrine, sanctified
By truth, shall spread, throughout the world dispersed."

XVIII

CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY.

"Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease
And cumbrous wealth, — the shame of your estate
You, on whose progress dazzling trains await
Of pompous horses; whom vain titles please;
Who will be served by others on their knees,
Yet will yourselves to God no service pay;

Pastors who neither take nor point the way
To Heaven; for, either lost in vanities
Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know
And speak the word ——" Alas! of fearful things
'T is the most fearful when the people's eye
Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings;
And taught the general voice to prophesy
Of Justice armed, and Pride to be laid low.

XIX.

ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER.

And what is Penance with her knotted thong;
Mortification with the shirt of hair,
Wan cheek, and knees indúrated with prayer,
Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long;
If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong
The pious, humble, useful Secular,
And rob the people of his daily care,
Scorning that world whose blindness makes her strong?
Inversion strange! that, unto One who lives
For self, and struggles with himself alone,
The amplest share of heavenly favor gives;
That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem
Of God and man, place higher than to him
Who on the good of others builds his own!

XX.

MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS.

YET more, — round many a Convent's blazing fire
Unhallowed threads of reveiry are spun;
There Venus sits disguisèd like a Nun, —
While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of a Friar,
Pours out his choicest beverage high and higher
Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run
Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won
An instant kiss of masterful desire,
To stay the precious waste. Through every brain
The domination of the sprightly juice
Spreads high conceits to madding Fancy dear,
Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse
Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain,
Whose votive burden is, — "OUR KINGDOM 'S HERE!"

XXI.

DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES.

THREATS come which no submission may assuage,
No sacrifice avert, no power dispute;
The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries mute,
And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by selfish rage,
The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage;
The gadding bramble hang her purple fruit;
And the green lizard and the gilded newt

Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.
The owl of evening and the woodland fox
For their abode the shrines of Waltham choose:
Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse
To stoop her head before these desperate shocks, —
She whose high pomp displaced, as story tells,
Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.

XXII.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE lovely Nun (submissive, but more meek
Through saintly habit than from effort due
To unrelenting mandates that pursue
With equal wrath the steps of strong and weak
Goes forth, — unveiling timidly a cheek
Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,
While through the Convent's gate to open view
Softly she glides, another home to seek.
Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,
An Apparition more divinely bright!
Not more attractive to the dazzled sight
Those watery glories, on the stormy brine
Poured forth, while summer suns at distance shine
And the green vales lie hushed in sober light!

XXIII.

CONTINUED.

Yet many a Novice of the cloistral shade,
And many chained by vows, with eager glee
The warrant hail, exulting to be free;
Like ships before whose keels, full long embayed
In polar ice, propitious winds have made
Unlooked-for outlet to an open sea,
Their liquid world, for bold discovery,
In all her quarters temptingly displayed!
Hope guides the young; but when the old must pass
The threshold, whither shall they turn to find
The hospitality, the alms (alas!
Alms may be needed) which that House bestowed?
Can they, in faith and worship, train the mind
To keep this new and questionable road?

XXIV.

SAINTS.

Ye, too, must fly before a chasing hand,
Angels and Saints, in every hamlet mourned!
Ah! if the old idolatry be spurned,
Let not your radiant Shapes desert the Land:
Her adoration was not your demand,
The fond heart proffered it, — the servile heart;
And therefore are ye summoned to depart,

Michael, and thou, St. George, whose flaming brand
The Dragon quelled; and valiant Margaret
Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:
And rapt Cecilia, seraph-haunted Queen
Of harmony; and weeping Magdalene,
Who in the penitential desert met
Gales sweet as those that over Eden blew!

XXV.

THE VIRGIN.

MOTHER! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

XXVI.

APOLOGY.

NOT utterly unworthy to endure
Was the supremacy of crafty Rome;

Age after age to the arch of Christendom
Aërial keystone haughtily secure;
Supremacy from Heaven transmitted pure,
As many hold; and, therefore, to the tomb
Pass, some through fire, — and by the scaffold some, —
Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.
"Lightly for both the bosom's lord did sit
Upon his throne"; unsoftened, undismayed
By aught that mingled with the tragic scene
Of pity or fear; and More's gay genius played
With the inoffensive sword of native wit,
Than the bare axe more luminous and keen.

XXVII.

IMAGINATIVE REGRETS.

Deep is the lamentation! Not alone
From sages justly honored by mankind;
But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,
Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous groan
Issues for that dominion overthrown:
Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges, blind
As his own worshippers: and Nile, reclined
Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell moan
Renews. Through every forest, cave, and den,
Where frauds were hatched of old, hath sorrow past, —
Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native Waste,

Where once his airy helpers schemed and planned
Mid spectral lakes bemocking thirsty men,
And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

XXVIII.

REFLECTIONS.

GRANT, that by this unsparing hurricane
Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn away,
And goodly fruitage with the mother spray;
'T were madness, wished we, therefore, to detain,
With hands stretched forth in mollified disdain,
The "trumpery" that ascends in bare display, —
Bulls, pardons, relics, cowls black, white, and gray, —
Upwhirled, and flying o'er the ethereal plain
Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet not choice,
But habit, rules the unreflecting herd,
And airy bounds are hardest to disown;
Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty transferred
Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice
Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

XXIX.

TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

BUT, to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book,
In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,
Assumes the accents of our native tongue;

And he who guides the plough, or wields the crook,
With understanding spirit now may look
Upon her records, listen to her song,
And sift her laws, — much wondering that the wrong,
Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could calmly brook.
Transcendent Boon! noblest that earthly king
Ever bestowed to equalize and bless
Under the weight of mortal wretchedness!
But passions spread like plagues, and thousands wild
With bigotry shall tread the Offering
Beneath their feet, detested and defiled.

XXX.

THE POINT AT ISSUE.

For what contend the wise? — for nothing less
Than that the Soul, freed from the bonds of Sense,
And to her God restored by evidence
Of things not seen, drawn forth from their recess,
Root there, and not in forms, her holiness; —
For Faith, which to the Patriarchs did dispense
Sure guidance, ere a ceremonial fence
Was needful round men thirsting to transgress; —
For Faith, more perfect still, with which the Lord
Of all, himself a Spirit, in the youth
Of Christian aspiration, deigned to fill
The temples of their hearts who, with his word

Informed, were resolute to do his will,
And worship him in spirit and in truth.

XXXI.

EDWARD VI.

"SWEET is the holiness of Youth"; — so felt
Time-honored Chaucer, speaking through that Lay
By which the Prioress beguiled the way,
And many a Pilgrim's rugged heart did melt.
Hadst thou, loved Bard! whose spirit often dwelt
In the clear land of vision, but foreseen
King, child, and seraph blended in the mien
Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt
In meek and simple infancy, what joy
For universal Christendom had thrilled
Thy heart! what hopes inspired thy genius, skilled
(O great Precursor, genuine morning Star!)
The lucid shafts of reason to employ,
Piercing the Papal darkness from afar!

XXXII.

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR THE EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT.

THE tears of man in various measures gush
From various sources; gently overflow
From blissful transport some, — from clefts of woe
Some with ungovernable impulse rush;

And some, coeval with the earliest blush
Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show
Their pearly lustre, — coming but to go;
And some break forth when others' sorrows crush
The sympathizing heart. Nor these, nor yet
The noblest drops to admiration known,
To gratitude, to injuries forgiven,
Claim Heaven's regard like waters that have wet
The innocent eyes of youthful Monarchs, driven
To pen the mandates nature doth disown.

XXXIII.

REVIVAL OF POPERY.

The saintly Youth has ceased to rule, discrowned
By unrelenting Death. O People keen
For change, to whom the new looks always green!
Rejoicing did they cast upon the ground
Their Gods of wood and stone; and, at the sound
Of counter-proclamation, now are seen
(Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen!)
Lifting them up, the worship to confound
Of the Most High. Again do they invoke
The Creature, to the Creature glory give;
Again with frankincense the altars smoke
Like those the Heathen served; and mass is sung;
And prayer, man's rational prerogative,
Runs through blind channels of an unknown tongue.

XXXIV.

LATIMER AND RIDLEY.

How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled!
See Latimer and Ridley in the might
Of Faith stand coupled for a common flight!
One (like those prophets whom God sent of old
Transfigured,* from this kindling hath foretold
A torch of inextinguishable light;
The other gains a confidence as bold;
And thus they foil their enemy's despite.
The penal instruments, the shows of crime,
Are glorified while this once-mitred pair
Of saintly Friends the "murderer's chain partake,
Corded, and burning at the social stake":
Earth never witnessed object more sublime
In constancy, in fellowship more fair!

XXXV.

CRANMER.

Outstretching flame-ward his upbraided hand,
(O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat
Of judgment such presumptuous doom repeat!)
Amid the shuddering throng doth Cranmer stand,
Firm as the stake to which with iron band
His frame is tied; firm from the naked feet
To the bare head. The victory is complete;

* See Note.

The shrouded Body to the Soul's command
Answers with more than Indian fortitude,
Through all her nerves with finer sense endued,
Till breath departs in blissful aspiration:
Then, 'mid the ghastly ruins of the fire,
Behold the unalterable heart entire,
Emblem of faith untouched, miraculous attestation! *

XXXVI.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF THE REFORMATION.

Aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of light,
Our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect trust
(While we look round) that Heaven's decrees are just:
Which few can hold committed to a fight
That shows, even on its better side, the might
Of proud Self-will, Rapacity, and Lust,
'Mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust,
Which showers of blood seem rather to incite
Than to allay. Anathemas are hurled
From both sides; veteran thunders (the brute test
Of truth) are met by fulminations new, —
Tartarean flags are caught at, and unfurled, —
Friends strike at friends — the flying shall pursue, —
And Victory sickens, ignorant where to rest!

* For the belief in this fact, see the contemporary Historians.

XXXVII.

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE.

Scattering, like birds escaped the fowler's net,
Some seek with timely flight a foreign strand;
Most happy, reassembled in a land
By dauntless Luther freed, could they forget
Their Country's woes. But scarcely have they met,
Partners in faith, and brothers in distress,
Free to pour forth their common thankfulness,
Ere hope declines: — their union is beset
With speculative notions rashly sown,
Whence thickly-sprouting growth of poisonous weeds;
Their forms are broken staves; their passions, steeds
That master them. How enviably blest
Is he who can, by help of grace, enthrone
The peace of God within his single breast!

XXXVIII.

ELIZABETH.

Hail, Virgin Queen! o'er many an envious bar
Triumphant, snatched from many a treacherous wile!
All hail, sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle
Hath blest, respiring from that dismal war
Stilled by thy voice! But quickly from afar

Defiance breathes with more malignant aim;
And alien storms with homebred ferments claim
Portentous fellowship. Her silver car,
By sleepless prudence ruled, glides slowly on;
Unhurt by violence, from menaced taint
Emerging pure, and seemingly more bright:
Ah! wherefore yields it to a foul constraint
Black as the clouds its beams dispersed, while shone,
By men and angels blest, the glorious light?

XXXIX.

EMINENT REFORMERS.

METHINKS that I could trip o'er heaviest soil,
Light as a buoyant bark from wave to wave,
Were mine the trusty staff that JEWEL gave
To youthful HOOKER, in familiar style
The gift exalting, and with playful smile: *
For thus equipped, and bearing on his head
The Donor's farewell blessing, can he dread
Tempest, or length of way, or weight of toil? —
More sweet than odors caught by him who sails
Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,
A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,
The freight of holy feeling which we meet,
In thoughtful moments, wafted by the gales
From fields where good men walk, or bowers
wherein they rest.

* See Notes

XL.

THE SAME.

Holy and heavenly Spirits as they are,
Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,
With what entire affection do they prize
Their Church reformed! laboring with earnest care
To baffle all that may her strength impair;
That Church, the unperverted Gospel's seat;
In their afflictions, a divine retreat;
Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest
prayer!—
The truth exploring with an equal mind,
In doctrine and communion they have sought
Firmly between the two extremes to steer;
But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot,
To trace right courses for the stubborn blind
And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

XLI.

DISTRACTIONS.

Men, who have ceased to reverence, soon defy
Their forefathers; lo! sects are formed, and split
With morbid restlessness; — the ecstatic fit
Spreads wide; though special mysteries multiply
The Saints must govern, is their common cry;
And so they labor, deeming Holy Writ
Disgraced by aught that seems content to sit

Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.
The Romanist exults; fresh hope he draws
From the confusion, craftily incites
The overweening, personates the mad,
To heap disgust upon the worthier Cause.
Totters the Throne; the new-born Church is sad
For every wave against her peace unites.

XLII.

GUNPOWDER PLOT.

Fear hath a hundred eyes that all agree
To plague her beating heart; and there is one
(Nor idlest that!) which holds communion
With things that were not, yet were *meant* to be.
Aghast within its gloomy cavity
That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and done
Crimes that might stop the motion of the sun)
Beholds the horrible catastrophe
Of an assembled Senate unredeemed
From subterraneous Treason's darkling power:
Merciless act of sorrow infinite!
Worse than the product of that dismal night,
When, gushing copious as a thunder-shower,
The blood of Huguenots through Paris streamed.

XLIII.

ILLUSTRATION.

THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF THE RHINE NEAR SCHAFFHAUSEN.

THE Virgin-Mountain,* wearing like a Queen
A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,
Sheds ruin from her sides; and men below
Wonder that aught of aspect so serene
Can link with desolation. Smooth and green,
And seeming, at a little distance, slow,
The waters of the Rhine; but on they go,
Fretting and whitening, keener and more keen;
Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood,
Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils breathe
Blasts of tempestuous smoke, — wherewith he tries
To hide himself, but only magnifies;
And doth in more conspicuous torment writhe,
Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

XLIV.

TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

EVEN such the contrast that, where'er we move,
To the mind's eye Religion doth present;
Now with her own deep quietness content;
Then, like the mountain, thundering from above
Against the ancient pine-trees of the grove

* The Jung-frau.

And the Land's humblest comforts. Now her mood
Recalls the transformation of the flood,
Whose rage the gentle skies in vain reprove,
Earth cannot check. O terrible excess
Of headstrong will. Can this be Piety?
No, — some fierce Maniac hath usurped her name
And scourges England struggling to be free:
Her peace destroyed! her hopes a wilderness!
Her blessings cursed, — her glory turned to shame

XLV.

LAUD.*

Prejudged by foes determined not to spare,
An old, weak Man for vengeance thrown aside,
Laud, "in the painful art of dying" tried,
(Like a poor bird entangled in a snare,
Whose heart still flutters, though his wings forbear
To stir in useless struggle,) hath relied
On hope that conscious innocence supplied,
And in his prison breathes celestial air.
Why tarries then thy chariot? Wherefore stay,
O Death! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels
Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey
(What time a state with madding faction reels)
The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay?

* See Note.

XLVI.

AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND.

HARP! couldst thou venture, on thy boldest string
The faintest note to echo which the blast
Caught from the hand of Moses as it passed
O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd-king,
Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing
Of dread Jehovah; then should wood and waste
Hear also of that name, and mercy cast
Off to the mountains, like a covering
Of which the Lord was weary. Weep, O weep
Weep with the good, beholding King and Priest
Despised by that stern God to whom they raise
Their suppliant hands: but holy is the feast
He keepeth; like the firmament his ways;
His statutes like the chambers of the deep.

PART III.

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

I.

I SAW the figure of a lovely Maid
Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,
Whose fondly-overhanging canopy
Set off her brightness with a pleasing shade.

No Spirit was she; *that* my heart betrayed,
For she was one I loved exceedingly;
But while I gazed in tender reverie,
(Or was it sleep that with my Fancy played?)
The bright corporeal presence, — form and face, —
Remaining still distinct, grew thin and rare,
Like sunny mist; — at length the golden hair,
Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, keeping pace
Each with the other in a lingering race
Of dissolution, melted into air.

II.

PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES.

Last night, without a voice, that Vision spake
Fear to my Soul, and sadness which might seem
Wholly dissevered from our present theme;
Yet, my belovèd Country! I partake
Of kindred agitations for thy sake;
Thou, too, dost visit oft my midnight dream;
Thy glory meets me with the earliest beam
Of light, which tells that morning is awake.
If aught impair thy beauty, or destroy,
Or but forebode destruction, I deplore
With filial love the sad vicissitude;
If thou hast fallen, and righteous Heaven restore
The prostrate, then my spring-time is renewed,
And sorrow bartered for exceeding joy.

III.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

Who comes, — with rapture greeted, and caress'd
With frantic love, — his kingdom to regain?
Him Virtue's Nurse, Adversity, in vain
Received, and fostered in her iron breast:
For all she taught of hardiest and of best,
Or would have taught, by discipline of pain
And long privation, now dissolves amain,
Or is remembered only to give zest
To wantonness. — Away, Circean revels!
But for what gain? if England soon must sink
Into a gulf which all distinction levels, —
That bigotry may swallow the good name,
And, with that draught, the life-blood: misery shame,
By Poets loathed; from which Historians shrink

IV.

LATITUDINARIANISM.

Yet Truth is keenly sought for, and the wind
Charged with rich words poured out in thought's defence;
Whether the Church inspire that eloquence,
Or a Platonic Piety confined
To the sole temple of the inward mind;
And one there is who builds immortal lays,

Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,
Darkness before and danger's voice behind;
Yet not alone, nor helpless to repel
Sad thoughts; for from above the starry sphere
Come secrets, whispered nightly to his ear;
And the pure spirit of celestial light
Shines through his soul,—"that he may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

V.

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES.

THERE are no colors in the fairest sky
So fair as these. The feather, whence the pen
Was shaped that traced the lives of these good men,
Dropped from an Angel's wing. With moistened eye
We read of faith and purest charity
In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen:
O could we copy their mild virtues, then
What joy to live, what blessedness to die!
Methinks their very names shine still and bright;
Apart,—like glowworms on a summer night;
Or lonely tapers when from far they fling
A guiding ray; or seen, like stars on high,
Satellites burning in a lucid ring
Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

VI.

CLERICAL INTEGRITY.

Nor shall the eternal roll of praise reject
Those Unconforming; whom one rigorous day
Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey
To poverty, and grief, and disrespect,
And some to want, — as if by tempests wrecked
On a wild coast; how destitute! did they
Feel not that Conscience never can betray,
That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect?
Their altars they forego, their homes they quit,
Fields which they love, and paths they daily trod
And cast the future upon Providence;
As men the dictates of whose inward sense
Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving wit
Lures not from what they deem the cause of God.

VII.

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS.

When Alpine vales threw forth a suppliant cry,
The majesty of England interposed
And the sword stopped; the bleeding wounds were
closed;
And Faith preserved her ancient purity.
How little boots that precedent of good,
Scorned or forgotten, thou canst testify,
For England's sham O Sister Realm! from wood

Mountain, and moor, and crowded street, where lie
The headless martyrs of the Covenant,
Slain by compatriot Protestants that draw
From councils senseless as intolerant
Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-law;
But who would force the Soul, tilts with a straw
Against a Champion cased in adamant.

VIII.

ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS.

A VOICE, from long-expecting thousands sent,
Shatters the air, and troubles tower and spire;
For Justice hath absolved the innocent,
And Tyranny is balked of her desire:
Up, down, the busy Thames — rapid as fire
Coursing a train of gunpowder — it went,
And transport finds in every street a vent,
Till the whole City rings like one vast choir.
The Fathers urge the People to be still,
With outstretched hands and earnest speech, — in vain!
Yea, many, haply wont to entertain
Small reverence for the mitre's offices,
And to Religion's self no friendly will,
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

IX.

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

Calm as an under-current, strong to draw
Millions of waves into itself, and run,
From sea to sea, impervious to the sun
And ploughing storm, the spirit of Nassau
(Swerves not, how blest if by religious awe
Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend
With the wide world's commotions) from its end
Swerves not, — diverted by a casual law.
Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope?
The Hero comes to liberate, not defy;
And, while he marches on with steadfast hope,
Conqueror beloved! expected anxiously!
The vacillating Bondman of the Pope
Shrinks from the verdict of his steadfast eye.

X.

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Ungrateful Country, if thou e'er forget
The sons who for thy civil rights have bled!
How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his head,
And Russel's milder blood the scaffold wet!
But these had fallen for profitless regret
Had not thy holy Church her champions bred,
And claims from other worlds inspirited
The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet

(Grave this within thy heart!) if spiritual things
Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,
Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,
However hardly won or justly dear:
What came from heaven to heaven by nature clings,
And if dissevered thence, its course is short.

XI.

SACHEVEREL.

A SUDDEN conflict rises from the swell
Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained
In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or feigned,
Spread through all ranks; and lo! the Sentinel
Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell
Stands at the Bar, absolved by female eyes
Mingling their glances with grave flatteries
Lavished on *him*, that England may rebel
Against her ancient virtue. HIGH and LOW,
Watch-words of Party, on all tongues are rife;
As if a Church, though sprung from heaven, must
owe
To opposite and fierce extremes her life, —
Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow
Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife.

XII.

DOWN a swift stream, thus far, a bold design
Have we pursued, with livelier stir of heart

Than his who sees, borne forward by the Rhine,
The living landscapes greet him, and depart;
Sees spires fast sinking, up again to start!
And strives the towers to number, that recline
O'er the dark steeps, or on the horizon line
Striding with shattered crests his eye athwart.
So have we hurried on with troubled pleasure:
Henceforth, as on the bosom of a stream
That slackens, and spreads wide a watery gleam,
We, nothing loth a lingering course to measure,
May gather up our thoughts, and mark at leisure
How widely spread the interests of our theme.

XIII.

ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA.

I. THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

WELL worthy to be magnified are they
Who, with sad hearts, of friends and country took
A last farewell, their loved abodes forsook,
And hallowed ground in which their fathers lay;
Then to the new-found World explored their way
That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to brook
Ritual restraints, within some sheltering nook
Her Lord might worship and his word obey
In freedom. Men they were who could not bend
Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for guide
A will by sovereign Conscience sanctified;
Blest while their Spirits from the woods ascend

Along a Galaxy that knows no end,
But in His glory who for sinners died.

XIV.

II. CONTINUED.

From Rite and Ordinance abused they fled
To Wilds where both were utterly unknown ;
But not to them had Providence foreshown
What benefits are missed, what evils bred,
In worship neither raised nor limited
Save by Self-will. Lo ! from that distant shore,
For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led
Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of yore,
Led by her own free choice. So Truth and Love
By Conscience governed do their steps retrace.—
Fathers ! your Virtues, such the power of grace,
Their spirit, in your Children, thus approve.
Transcendent over time, unbound by place,
Concord and Charity in circles move.

XV.

III. CONCLUDED.— AMERICAN EPISCOPACY.

Patriots informed with Apostolic light
Were they, who, when their country had been freed,
Bowing with reverence to the ancient creed,
Fixed on the frame of England's Church their
sight,

And strove in filial love to reunite
What force had severed. Thence they fetched the seed
Of Christian unity, and won a meed
Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O saintly White,
Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,
Remotest lands and unborn times shall turn,
Whether they would restore or build, — to thee,
As one who rightly taught how zeal should burn,
As one who drew from out Faith's holiest urn
The purest stream of patient Energy.

XVI.

Bishops and Priests, blessèd are ye, if deep,
(As yours above all offices is high,)
Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie;
Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and keep
From wolves your portion of his chosen sheep:
Laboring as ever in your Master's sight,
Making your hardest task your best delight,
What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall reap! —
But, in the solemn Office which ye sought
And undertook premonished, if unsound
Your practice prove, faithless though but in thought,
Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf profound
Awaits you then, if they were rightly taught
Who framed the Ordinance by your lives disowned

XVII.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

As star that shines dependent upon star
Is to the sky while we look up in love;
As to the deep fair ships, which though they move
Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from afar;
As to the sandy desert fountains are,
With palm-groves shaded at wide intervals,
Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native falls
Of roving tired or desultory war, —
Such to this British Isle her Christian Fanes,
Each linked to each for kindred services;
Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glittering vanes
Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among trees,
Where a few villagers on bended knees
Find solace which a busy world disdains.

XVIII.

PASTORAL CHARACTER.

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion, where, his flock among,
The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful Lord.
Though meek and patient as a sheathèd sword;
Though pride's least lurking thought appear a wrong

To human kind; though peace be on his tongue
Gentleness in his heart, — can earth afford
Such genuine state, preëminence so free,
As when, arrayed in Christ's authority,
He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand;
Conjures, implores, and labors all he can
For resubjecting to divine command
The stubborn spirit of rebellious man?

XIX.

THE LITURGY.

Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear
Attract us still, and passionate exercise
Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
Distinct with signs, through which in set career,
As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year
Of England's Church; stupendous mysteries!
Which whoso travels in her bosom eyes,
As he approaches them, with solemn cheer.
Upon that circle traced from sacred story
We only dare to cast a transient glance,
Trusting in hope that others may advance
With mind intent upon the King of Glory,
From his mild advent till his countenance
Shall dissipate the seas and mountains hoary.

XX.

BAPTISM.

DEAR be the Church, that, watching o'er the needs
Of Infancy, provides a timely shower,
Whose virtue changes to a Christian Flower
A Growth from sinful Nature's bed of weeds! —
Fitliest beneath the sacred roof proceeds
The ministration; while parental Love
Looks on, and Grace descendeth from above
As the high service pledges now, now pleads.
There, should vain thoughts outspread their wings and fly
To meet the coming hours of festal mirth,
The tombs — which hear and answer that brief cry,
The Infant's notice of his second birth —
Recall the wandering Soul to sympathy
With what man hopes from Heaven, yet fears from Earth.

XXI.

SPONSORS.

FATHER! to God himself we cannot give
A holier name! then lightly do not bear
Both names conjoined, but of thy spiritual care
Be duly mindful: still more sensitive
Do thou, in truth a second Mother, strive

Against disheartening custom, that by thee
Watched, and with love and pious industry
Tended at need, the adopted Plant may thrive
For everlasting bloom. Benign and pure
This Ordinance, whether loss it would supply,
Prevent omission, help deficiency,
Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.
Shame if the consecrated Vow be found
An idle form, the Word an empty sound!

XXII.

CATECHIZING.

From Little down to Least, in due degree,
Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,
Each with a vernal posy at his breast,
We stood, a trembling, earnest Company!
With low, soft murmur, like a distant bee,
Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears betrayed
And some a bold, unerring answer made:
How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,
Belovèd Mother! Thou whose happy hand
Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie:
Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible command
Her countenance, phantom-like, doth reappear:
O lost too early for the frequent tear,
And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh!

XXIII.

CONFIRMATION.

THE Young-ones gathered in from hill and dale,
With holiday delight on every brow:
'T is past away; far other thoughts prevail;
For they are taking the baptismal Vow
Upon their conscious selves; their own lips speak
The solemn promise. Strongest sinews fail,
And many a blooming, many a lovely cheek,
Under the holy fear of God turns pale;
While on each head his lawn-robed servant lays
An apostolic hand, and with prayer seals
The Covenant. The Omnipotent will raise
Their feeble Souls; and bear with *his* regrets,
Who, looking round the fair assemblage, feels
That ere the Sun goes down their childhood sets.

XXIV.

CONFIRMATION, CONTINUED.

I SAW a Mother's eye intensely bent
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt;
In and for whom the pious Mother felt
Things that we judge of by a light too faint:
Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse, or Saint!
Tell what rushed in, from what she was relieved,
Then, when her Child the hallowing touch received,
And such vibration through the Mother went
That tears burst forth amain. Did gleams appear?

Opened a vision of that blissful place
Where dwells a Sister-child? And was power given
Part of her lost One's glory back to trace
Even to this Rite? For thus *she* knelt, and, ere
The summer-leaf had faded, passed to Heaven.

XXV.

SACRAMENT.

By chain yet stronger must the Soul be tied:
One duty more, last stage of this ascent,
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacrament!
The Offspring, haply at the Parent's side;
But not till they, with all that do abide
In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts to laud
And magnify the glorious name of God,
Fountain of Grace, whose Son for sinners died.
Ye, who have duly weighed the summons, pause
No longer; ye, whom to the saving rite
The Altar calls; come early under laws
That can secure for you a path of light
Through gloomiest shade; put on (nor dread its weight)
Armor divine, and conquer in your cause!

XXVI.

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

The Vested Priest before the Altar stands;
Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in sight

Of God and chosen friends, your troth to plight
With the symbolic ring, and willing hands
Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the bands,
O Father! — to the Espoused thy blessing give,
That mutually assisted they may live
Obedient, as here taught, to thy commands.
So prays the Church, to consecrate a Vow
"The which would endless matrimony make";
Union that shadows forth and doth partake
A mystery potent human love to endow
With heavenly, each more prized for the other's
sake;
Weep not, meek Bride! uplift thy timid brow.

XXVII.

THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH.

WOMAN! the Power who left his throne on high
And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we wear,
The Power that through the straits of Infancy
Did pass dependent on maternal care,
His own humanity with thee will share,
Pleased with the thanks that in his People's eye
Thou offerest up for safe Delivery
From Childbirth's perilous throes. And should
the Heir
Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined
To courses fit to make a mother rue
That ever he was born. a glance of mind

Cast upon this observance may renew
A better will; and, in the imagined view
Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may find

XXVIII.

VISITATION OF THE SICK.

The Sabbath bells renew the inviting peal;
Glad music! yet there be that, worn with pain
And sickness, listen where they long have lain,
In sadness listen. With maternal zeal
Inspired, the Church sends ministers to kneel
Beside the afflicted; to sustain with prayer,
And soothe the heart confession hath laid bare,—
That pardon, from God's throne, may set its seal
On a true Penitent. When breath departs
From one disburdened so, so comforted,
His Spirit Angels greet; and ours be hope
That, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-bed,
Hence he will gain a firmer mind, to cope
With a bad world, and foil the Tempter's arts.

XXIX.

THE COMMINATION SERVICE.

Shun not this rite, neglected, yea, abhorred,
By some of unreflecting mind, as calling
Man to curse man (thought monstrous and appalling).

Go thou and hear the threatenings of the *Lord;*
Listening within his Temple, see his sword
Unsheathed in wrath to strike the offender's head,
Thy own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,
Guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored.
Two aspects bears Truth needful for salvation;
Who knows not *that?*—yet would this delicate age
Look only on the Gospel's brighter page:
Let light and dark duly our thoughts employ;
So shall the fearful words of Commination
Yield timely fruit of peace and love and joy.

XXX.

FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA.

To kneeling Worshippers no earthly floor
Gives holier invitation than the deck
Of a storm-shattered Vessel saved from Wreck
(When all that Man could do availed no more)
By Him who raised the Tempest and restrains:
Happy the crew who this have felt, and pour
Forth for His mercy, as the Church ordains,
Solemn thanksgiving. Nor will *they* implore
In vain, who, for a rightful cause, give breath,
To words the Church prescribes, aiding the lip
For the heart's sake, ere ship with hostile ship
Encounters, armed for work of pain and death.
Suppliants! the God to whom your cause ye trust
Will listen, and ye know that He is just.

XXXI.

FUNERAL SERVICE.

FROM the Baptismal hour, through weal and woe
The Church extends her care to thought and deed
Nor quits the Body when the Soul is freed,
The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.
Blest Rite for him who hears in faith, "I know
That my Redeemer liveth," — hears each word
That follows, striking on some kindred chord
Deep in the thankful heart; — yet tears will flow.
Man is as grass that springeth up at morn,
Grows green, and is cut down and withereth
Ere nightfall, — truth that well may claim a sigh,
Its natural echo; but hope comes reborn
At Jesu's bidding. We rejoice, "O Death,
Where is thy Sting? — O Grave, where is thy
Victory?"

XXXII.

RURAL CEREMONY.*

CLOSING the sacred Book which long has fed
Our meditations, give we to a day
Of annual joy one tributary lay;
This day, when, forth by rustic music led,
The village Children, while the sky is red

* See Note.

With evening lights, advance in long array
Through the still churchyard, each with garland gay,
That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the head
Of the proud Bearer. To the wide church-door,
Charged with these offerings which their fathers bore
For decoration in the Papal time,
The innocent Procession softly moves: —
The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's pure clime,
And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves!

XXXIII.

REGRETS.

WOULD that our scrupulous Sires had dared to leave
Less scanty measures of those graceful rites
And usages, whose due return invites
A stir of mind too natural to deceive;
Giving to Memory help when she would weave
A crown for Hope! — I dread the boasted lights
That all too often are but fiery blights,
Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.
Go, seek, when Christmas snows discomfort bring
The counter Spirit found in some gay church
Green with fresh holly, every pew a perch
In which the linnet or the thrush might sing,
Merry and loud and safe from prying search,
Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

XXXIV.

MUTABILITY.

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sink from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, which royally did wear
His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

XXXV.

OLD ABBEYS.

Monastic Domes! following my downward way
Untouched by due regret I marked your fall!
Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all
Dispose to judgments temperate as we lay
On our past selves in life's declining day:
For as, by discipline of Time made wise,
We learn to tolerate the infirmities

And faults of others, gently as he may,
So with our own the mild Instructor deals,
Teaching us to forget them or forgive.
Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill
Why should we break Time's charitable seals?
Once ye were holy, ye are holy still;
Your spirit freely let me drink, and live!

XXXVI.

EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY.

Even while I speak, the sacred roofs of France
Are shattered into dust; and self-exiled
From altars threatened, levelled, or defiled,
Wander the Ministers of God, as chance
Opens a way for life, or consonance
Of faith invites. More welcome to no land
The fugitives than to the British strand,
Where priest and layman with the vigilance
Of true compassion greet them. Creed and test
Vanish before the unreserved embrace
Of catholic humanity: — distrest
They came, — and, while the moral tempest roars
Throughout the Country they have left, our shores
Give to their Faith a fearless resting-place.

XXXVII.

CONGRATULATION.

THUS all things lead to Charity, secured
By THEM who blessed the soft and happy gale
That landward urged the great Deliverer's sail,
Till in the sunny bay his fleet was moored!
Propitious hour! had we, like them, endured
Sore stress of apprehension,* with a mind
Sickened by injuries, dreading worse designed,
From month to month trembling and unassured,
How had we then rejoiced! But we have felt,
As a loved substance, their futurity:
Good, which they dared not hope for, we have seen;
A State whose generous will through earth is dealt;
A State, which, balancing herself between
License and slavish order, dares be free.

XXXVIII.

NEW CHURCHES.

BUT liberty, and triumphs on the Main,
And laurelled armies, not to be withstood, —
What serve they? if, on transitory good
Intent, and sedulous of abject gain,
The State (ah, surely not preserved in vain!)

* See Note.

Forbear to shape due channels which the Flood
Of sacred truth may enter, till it brood
O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian plain
The all-sustaining Nile. No more, — the time
Is conscious of her want; through England's bounds,
In rival haste, the wished-for Temples rise!
I hear their Sabbath bells' harmonious chime
Float on the breeze, — the heavenliest of all sounds
That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies!

XXXIX.

CHURCH TO BE ERECTED.

Be this the chosen site; the virgin sod,
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,
Shall disappear, and grateful earth receive
The corner-stone from hands that build to God.
Yon reverend hawthorns, hardened to the rod
Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully,
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,
Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid this band
Of daisies, shepherds sat of yore and wove
May-garlands, there let the holy altar stand
For kneeling adoration; — while, above,
Broods, visibly portrayed, the mystic Dove,
That shall protect from blasphemy the Land.

XL.

CONTINUED.

Mine ear has rung, my spirit sunk subdued,
Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,
When each pale brow to dread hosannas bowed
While clouds of incense mounting veiled the rood
That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly viewed
Through Alpine vapors. Such appalling rite
Our Church prepares not, trusting to the might
Of simple truth with grace divine imbued;
Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
Like men ashamed: the Sun with his first smile
Shall greet that symbol crowning the low Pile:
And the fresh air of incense-breathing morn
Shall wooingly embrace it; and green moss
Creep round its arms through centuries unborn.

XLI.

NEW CHURCHYARD.

The encircling ground, in native turf arrayed,
Is now by solemn consecration given
To social interests, and to favoring Heaven.
And where the rugged colts their gambols played
And wild deer bounded through the forest glade
Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw driven,
Shall hymns of praise resound at morn and even

And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's spade
Shall wound the tender sod. Encincture small,
But infinite its grasp of weal and woe!
Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and flow; —
The spousal trembling, and the "dust to dust,"
The prayers, the contrite struggle, and the trust
That to the Almighty Father looks through all.

XLII.

CATHEDRALS, ETC.

Open your gates, ye everlasting Piles!
Types of the spiritual Church which God hath reared;
Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed sward
And humble altar, 'mid your sumptuous aisles
To kneel, or thrid your intricate defiles,
Or down the nave to pace in motion slow;
Watching, with upward eye, the tall tower grow
And mount, at every step, with living wiles
Instinct, — to rouse the heart and lead the will
By a bright ladder to the world above.
Open your gates, ye Monuments of love
Divine! thou, Lincoln, on thy sovereign hill!
Thou, stately York! and ye, whose splendors cheer
Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

XLIII.

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned —
Albeit laboring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only — this immense
And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more;
So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering, and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

XLIV.

THE SAME.

WHAT awful pérspective! while from our sight
With gradual stealth the lateral windows hide
Their Portraitures, their stone-work glimmers dyed
In the soft checkerings of a sleepy light.
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremite,
Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,

Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,
Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night! —
But, from the arms of silence, — list! O list! —
The music bursteth into second life;
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife;
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the eye
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!

XLV.

CONTINUED.

They dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam;
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
Melts, if it cross the threshold; where the wreath
Of awe-struck wisdom droops: or let my path
Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like dome
Hath typified by reach of daring art
Infinity's embrace; whose guardian crest,
The silent Cross, among the stars shall spread
As now, when she hath also seen her breast
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

XLVI.

EJACULATION.

Glory to God! and to the Power who came
In filial duty, clothed with love divine,
That made his human tabernacle shine
Like Ocean burning with purpureal flame;
Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name
From roseate hues, far kenned at morn and even,
In hours of peace, or when the storm is driven
Along the nether region's rugged frame!
Earth prompts, — Heaven urges; let us seek the light,
Studious of that pure intercourse begun
When first our infant brows their lustre won;
So, like the Mountain, may we grow more bright
From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,
At the approach of all-involving night.

XLVII.

CONCLUSION.

Why sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,
Coil within coil, at noontide? For the Word
Yields, if with unpresumptuous faith explored,
Power at whose touch the sluggard shall unfold
His drowsy rings. Look forth! — that Stream behold,

THAT STREAM upon whose bosom we have passed
Floating at ease while nations have effaced
Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold
Long lines of mighty kings,—look forth, my Soul!
(Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust:)
The living Waters, less and less by guilt
Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,
Till they have reached the Eternal City,—built
For the perfected Spirits of the just!

EVENING VOLUNTARIES.

I.

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose
Day's grateful warmth, though moist with falling
dews.
Look for the stars, you 'll say that there are none;
Look up a second time, and, one by one,
You mark them twinkling out with silvery light,
And wonder how they could elude the sight!
The birds, of late so noisy in their bowers,
Warbled awhile with faint and fainter powers,
But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers:
Nor does the village Church-clock's iron tone
The time's and season's influence disown;
Nine beats distinctly to each other bound,
In drowsy sequence, — how unlike the sound
That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear
On fireside listeners, doubting what they hear!
The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,
Had closed his door before the day was done,
And now with thankful heart to bed doth creep,
And joins his little children in their sleep.

The bat, lured forth where trees the lane o'ershade,
Flits and reflits along the close arcade;
The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth
With burring note, which Industry and Sloth
Might both be pleased with, for it suits them both.
A stream is heard, — I see it not, but know
By its soft music whence the waters flow:
Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard no more,
One boat there was, but it will touch the shore
With the next dipping of its slackened oar;
Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the gay,
Might give to serious thought a moment's sway,
As a last token of man's toilsome day!

1832

II.

ON A HIGH PART OF THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

Easter Sunday, April 7.

THE AUTHOR'S SIXTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY.

THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,
Flung back from distant climes a streaming fire,
Whose blaze is now subdued to tender gleams,
Prelude of night's approach with soothing dreams.
Look round; — of all the clouds not one is moving
'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling, loving.

Silent, and steadfast as the vaulted sky,
The boundless plain of water seems to lie: —
Comes that low sound from breezes rustling o'er
The grass-crowned headland that conceals the shore
No; 't is the earth-voice of the mighty sea,
Whispering how meek and gentle he *can* be!

Thou Power supreme! who, arming to rebuke
Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,
And clothe thyself with terrors, like the flood
Of ocean roused into his fiercest mood,
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain
For the brief course that must for me remain,
Teach me with quick-eared spirit to rejoice
In admonitions of thy softest voice!
Whate'er the path these mortal feet may trace,
Breathe through my soul the blessing of thy grace.
Glad, through a perfect love, a faith sincere
Drawn from the wisdom that begins with fear,
Glad to expand; and, for a season, free
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in Thee!

1833.

III.

(BY THE SEA-SIDE.)

THE sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to rest.
And the wild storm hath somewhere found a nest

Air slumbers, wave with wave no longer strives,
Only a heaving of the deep survives,
A telltale motion! soon will it be laid,
And by the tide alone the water swayed.
Stealthy withdrawings, interminglings mild
Of light with shade in beauty reconciled, —
Such is the prospect far as sight can range,
The soothing recompense, the welcome change.
Where now the ships that drove before the blast,
Threatened by angry breakers as they passed,
And by a train of flying clouds bemocked,
Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked
As on a bed of death? Some lodge in peace,
Saved by His care who bade the tempest cease;
And some, too heedless of past danger, court
Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off port;
But near, or hanging sea and sky between,
Not one of all those wingèd powers is seen,
Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet heard;
Yet oh! how gladly would the air be stirred
By some acknowledgment of thanks and praise,
Soft in its temper as those vesper lays
Sung to the Virgin while accordant oars
Urge the slow bark along Calabrian shores;
A sea-born service through the mountains felt
Till into one loved vision all things melt!
Or like those hymns that soothe with graver sound
The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound;
And, from the wide and open Baltic, rise
With punctual care, Lutherian harmonies!

Hush, not a voice is here! but why repine,
Now when the star of eve comes forth to shine
On British waters with that look benign?
Ye mariners, that plough your onward way,
Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,
May silent thanks at least to God be given
With a full heart; "our thoughts are *heard* in heaven!"

1833.

IV.

Not in the lucid intervals of life
That come but as a curse to party-strife;
Not in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh
Of languor puts his rosy garland by;
Not in the breathing-times of that poor slave
Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's cave —
Is Nature felt, or can be; nor do words,
Which practised talent readily affords,
Prove that her hand has touched responsive chords
Nor has her gentle beauty power to move
With genuine rapture and with fervent love
The soul of Genius, if he dare to take
Life's rule from passion craved for passion's sake
Untaught that meekness is the cherished bent
Of all the truly great and all the innocent.

But who *is* innocent? By grace divine,
Not otherwise, O Nature! we are thine,
Through good and evil thine, in just degree
Of rational and manly sympathy.
To all that Earth from pensive hearts is stealing,
And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes revealing,
Add every charm the Universe can show
Through every change its aspects undergo, —
Care may be respited, but not repealed;
No perfect cure grows on that bounded field.
Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,
If He, through whom alone our conflicts cease,
Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,
Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance;
To the distempered Intellect refuse
His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

1834.

V.

(BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE.)

The linnet's warble, sinking towards a close,
Hints to the thrush 't is time for their repose;
The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and again
The monitor revives his own sweet strain;
But both will soon be mastered, and the copse
Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,

Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest
The throng of rooks, that now, from twig or nest,
(After a steady flight on home-bound wings,
And a last game of mazy hoverings
Around their ancient grove,) with cawing noise
Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.

O Nightingale! Who ever heard thy song
Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so strong
That listening sense is pardonably cheated
Where wood or stream by thee was never greeted.
Surely, from fairest spots of favored lands,
Were not some gifts withheld by jealous hands,
This hour of deepening darkness here would be
As a fresh morning for new harmony;
And lays as prompt would hail the dawn of Night:
A *dawn* she has both beautiful and bright,
When the East kindles with the full moon's light;
Not like the rising sun's impatient glow
Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow
Of solemn splendor, in mutation slow.

Wanderer by spring with gradual progress led,
For sway profoundly felt as widely spread;
To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,
And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear;
How welcome wouldst thou be to this green Vale
Fairer than Tempe! Yet, sweet Nightingale!
From the warm breeze that bears thee on, alight
At will, and stay thy migratory flight;

Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or fount,
Who shall complain, or call thee to account?
The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they
That ever walk content with Nature's way,
God's goodness, — measuring bounty as it may;
For whom the gravest thought of what they miss,
Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,
Is with that wholesome office satisfied,
While unrepining sadness is allied
In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

1834.

VI.

Soft as a cloud is yon blue Ridge, — the Mere
Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye,
Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
Of its vague mountains and unreal sky!
But, from the process in that still retreat,
Turn to minuter changes at our feet;
Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn
The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,
And has restored to view its tender green,
That, while the sun rode high, was lost beneath
their dazzling sheen.
— An emblem this of what the sober Hour
Can do for minds disposed to feel its power!

Thus oft, when we in vain have wished away
The petty pleasures of the gairish day,
Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping host,
(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his post,)
And leaves the disencumbered spirit free
To reassume a staid simplicity.

'Tis well,—but what are helps of time and place,
When wisdom stands in need of nature's grace;
Why do good thoughts, invoked or not, descend,
Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues to befriend;
If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,
"I come to open out, for fresh display,
The elastic vanities of yesterday"?

1834.

VII.

The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill,
And sky that danced among those leaves, are still;
Rest smooths the way for sleep; in field and bower
Soft shades and dews have shed their blended power
On drooping eyelid and the closing flower;
Sound is there none at which the faintest heart
Might leap, the weakest nerve of superstition start
Save where the Owlet's unexpected scream
Pierces the ethereal vault; and ('mid the gleam

Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream,
From the hushed vale's realities, transferred
To the still lake) the imaginative Bird
Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not unheard.

Grave Creature! — whether, while the moon shines bright
On thy wings opened wide for smoothest flight,
Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,
Rising from what may once have been a lady's bower;
Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in thy mew
At the dim centre of a churchyard yew;
Or, from a rifted crag or ivy tod
Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,
Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek or shout,
A puzzling notice of thy whereabout, —
May the night never come, nor day be seen,
When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy mien!

In classic ages men perceived a soul
Of sapience in thy aspect, heedless Owl!
Thee Athens reverenced in the studious grove;
And, near the golden sceptre grasped by Jove,
His Eagle's favorite perch, while round him sat
The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,
Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's side:
Hark to that second larum! — far and wide
The elements have heard, and rock and cave replied.

1834.

VIII.

[This *Impromptu* appeared, many years ago, among the Author's poems, from which, in subsequent editions, it was excluded. It is reprinted, at the request of the Friend in whose presence the lines were thrown off.]

THE sun has long been set,
The stars are out by twos and threes,
The little birds are piping yet
Among the bushes and trees;
There 's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,
And a far-off wind that rushes,
And a sound of water that gushes,
And the cuckoo's sovereign cry
Fills all the hollow of the sky.
Who would go "parading"
In London, "and masquerading,"
On such a night of June,
With that beautiful, soft half-moon,
And all these innocent blisses?
On such a night as this is!

1804.

IX.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR AND BEAUTY.

I.

HAD this effulgence disapppeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,

Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of blank astonishment;
But 't is endued with power to stay
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see —
What is? — ah no, but what *can* be!
Time was when field and watery cove
With modulated echoes rang,
While choirs of fervent Angels sang
Their vespers in the grove;
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign height,
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,
Methinks, if audibly repeated now
From hill or valley, could not move
Sublimer transport, purer love,
Than doth this silent spectacle, — the gleam,
The shadow, and the peace supreme!

II.

No sound is uttered, — but a deep
And solemn harmony pervades
The hollow vale from steep to steep,
And penetrates the glades.
Far-distant images draw nigh,
Called forth by wondrous potency
Of beamy radiance, that imbues
Whate'er it strikes with gem-like hues!
In vision exquisitely clear,
Herds range along the mountain-side

And glistening antlers are descried,
And gilded flocks appear.
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve!
But long as godlike wish, or hope divine,
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
That this magnificence is wholly thine!
— From worlds not quickened by the sun
A portion of the gift is won;
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
On ground which British shepherds tread!

III.

And if there be whom broken ties
Afflict, or injuries assail,
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
Present a glorious scale,
Climbing, suffused with sunny air,
To stop — no record hath told where!
And tempting Fancy to ascend,
And with immortal Spirits blend!
— Wings at my shoulders seem to play;
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze
On those bright steps that heavenward raise
Their practicable way.
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad,
And see to what fair countries ye are bound!
And if some traveller, weary of his road,
Hath slept since noontide on the grassy ground,
Ye Genii! to his covert speed;
And wake him with such gentle heed

As may attune his soul to meet the dower
Bestowed on this transcendent hour!

IV.

Such hues from their celestial Urn
Were wont to stream before mine eye,
Where'er it wandered in the morn
Of blissful infancy.
This glimpse of glory, why renewed?
Nay, rather speak with gratitude;
For, if a vestige of those gleams
Survived, 't was only in my dreams.
Dread Power! whom peace and calmness serve
No less than Nature's threatening voice,
If aught unworthy be my choice,
From THEE if I would swerve,
O, let thy grace remind me of the light
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
Appears to shine, by miracle restored;
My soul, though yet confined to earth,
Rejoices in a second birth!
— 'T is past, the visionary splendor fades;
And night approaches with her shades.

1818.

Note. — The multiplication of mountain ridges, described at the commencement of the third Stanza of this Ode as a kind of Jacob's Ladder leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapors or sunny haze; — in the present instance, by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode entitled "Intimations of Immortality" pervade the last Stanza of the foregoing Poem.

X.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SHORE.

What mischief cleaves to unsubdued regret,
How fancy sickens by vague hopes beset,
How baffled projects on the spirit prey,
And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,
The Sailor knows; he best, whose lot is cast
On the relentless sea that holds him fast
On chance dependent, and the fickle star
Of power, through long and melancholy war.
O, sad it is, in sight of foreign shores,
Daily to think on old familiar doors,
Hearths loved in childhood, and ancestral floors;
Or tossed about along a waste of foam,
To ruminate on that delightful home
Which with the dear Betrothèd *was* to come,
Or came and was and is, yet meets the eye
Never but in the world of memory;
Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest range
Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread, of change,
And if not so, whose perfect joy makes sleep
A thing too bright for breathing man to keep!
Hail to the virtues which that perilous life
Extracts from Nature's elemental strife;
And welcome glory won in battles fought
As bravely as the foe was keenly sought!
But to each gallant Captain and his crew

A less imperious sympathy is due,
Such as my verse now yields, while moonbeams play
On the mute sea in this unruffled bay;
Such as will promptly flow from every breast,
Where good men, disappointed in the quest
Of wealth and power and honors, long for rest;
Or, having known the splendors of success,
Sigh for the obscurities of happiness.

XI.

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,
Glories of evening, as ye there are seen
With but a span of sky between, —
Speak one of you, my doubts remove,
Which is the attendant Page and which the Queen?

XII.

TO THE MOON.

(Composed by the Sea-side, — on the Coast of Cumberland.)

WANDERER! that stoop'st so low, and com'st so near
To human life's unsettled atmosphere;
Who lov'st with Night and Silence to partake,

So might it seem, the cares of them that wake;
And, through the cottage-lattice softly peeping,
Dost shield from harm the humblest of the sleeping
What pleasure once encompassed those sweet names
Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,
An idolizing dreamer as of yore! —
I slight them all; and, on this sea-beat shore
Sole-sitting, only can to thoughts attend
That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S FRIEND;
So call thee for Heaven's grace through thee made known,
By confidence supplied and mercy shown,
When not a twinkling star or beacon's light
Abates the perils of a stormy night;
And for less obvious benefits, that find
Their way, with thy pure help, to heart and mind
Both for the adventurer starting in life's prime,
And veteran ranging round from clime to clime,
Long-baffled hope's slow fever in his veins,
And wounds and weakness oft his labor's sole remains.

The aspiring Mountains and the winding Streams
Empress of Night! are gladdened by thy beams
A look of thine the wilderness pervades,
And penetrates the forest's inmost shades;
Thou, checkering peaceably the minster's gloom,
Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's tomb;
Canst reach the Prisoner, — to his grated cell
Welcome, though silent and intangible! —

And lives there one, of all that come and go
On the great waters, toiling to and fro,
One, who has watched thee at some quiet hour,
Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,
Or crossed by vapory streaks and clouds that move
Catching the lustre they in part reprove,
Nor sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway
To call up thoughts that shun the glare of day,
And make the serious happier than the gay?

Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly bright
Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,
To fiercer mood the frenzy-stricken brain,
Let me a compensating faith maintain; —
That there 's a sensitive, a tender part
Which thou canst touch in every human heart,
For healing and composure. — But, at least
And mightiest billows ever have confessed
Thy domination; as the whole vast Sea
Feels through her lowest depths thy sovereignty
So shines that countenance with especial grace
On them who urge the keel her *plains* to trace,
Furrowing its way right onward. The most rude,
Cut off from home and country, may have stood, —
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his eye,
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh, —
Touched by accordance of thy placid cheer,
With some internal lights to memory dear,
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the breast,
Tired with its daily share of earth's unrest, —

Gentle awakenings, visitations meek;
A kindly influence whereof few will speak,
Though it can wet with tears the hardiest cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy cave
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave;
Then, while the Sailor, 'mid an open sea
Swept by a favoring wind that leaves thought free
Paces the deck, — no star perhaps in sight,
And nothing save the moving ship's own light
To cheer the long, dark hours of vacant night, —
Oft with his musings does thy image blend,
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns ascend,
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S FRIEND

1835.

XIII.

TO THE MOON.

(RYDAL.)

QUEEN of the stars! so gentle, so benign,
That ancient Fable did to thee assign,
When darkness creeping o'er thy silver brow
Warned thee these upper regions to forego,
Alternate empire in the shades below, —
A Bard, who lately, near the wide-spread sea
Traversed by gleaming ships, looked up to thee
With grateful thoughts, doth now thy rising hail

From the close confines of a shadowy vale.
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene,
Nor less attractive when by glimpses seen
Through cloudy umbrage, well might that fair face,
And all those attributes of modest grace,
In days when Fancy wrought unchecked by fear,
Down to the green earth fetch thee from thy sphere
To sit in leafy woods by fountains clear!

O still beloved, (for thine, meek Power, are charms
That fascinate the very Babe in arms,
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs outright,
Spreading his little palms in his glad Mother's sight,)
O still beloved, once worshipped! Time, that frowns
In his destructive flight on earthly crowns,
Spares thy mild splendor; still those far-shot beams
Tremble on dancing waves and rippling streams
With stainless touch, as chaste as when thy praise
Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;
And through dark trials still dost thou explore
Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,
When teeming Matrons — yielding to rude faith
In mysteries of birth and life and death
And painful struggle and deliverance — prayed
Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.
What though the rites be swept away, the fanes
Extinct that echoed to the votive strains;
Yet thy mild aspect does not cannot, cease

Love to promote and purity and peace;
And Fancy, unreproved, even yet may trace
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless face.

Then, silent Monitress! let us — not blind
To worlds unthought of till the searching mind
Of Science laid them open to mankind, —
Told, also, how the voiceless heavens declare
God's glory; and acknowledging thy share
In that blest charge; let us — without offence
To aught of highest, holiest, influence —
Receive whatever good 't is given thee to dispense.
May sage and simple, catching with one eye
The moral intimations of the sky,
Learn from thy course, where'er their own be taken,
"To look on tempests, and be never shaken";
To keep with faithful step the appointed way
Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,
And from example of thy monthly range
Gently to brook decline and fatal change;
Meek, patient, steadfast, and with loftier scope
Than thy revival yields for gladsome hope!

1835.

XIV.

TO LUCCA GIORDANO.

Giordano, verily thy Pencil's skill
Hath here portrayed with Nature's happiest grace

The fair Endymion couched on Latmos hill;
And Dian gazing on the Shepherd's face
In rapture, yet suspending her embrace,
As not unconscious with what power the thrill
Of her most timid touch his sleep would chase,
And, with his sleep, that beauty calm and still.
O may this work have found its last retreat
Here in a Mountain-bard's secure abode!
One to whom, yet a School-boy, Cynthia showed
A face of love which he in love would greet,
Fixed, by her smile, upon some rocky seat,
Or lured along where greenwood paths he trod.

RYDAL MOUNT 1846.

XV.

WHO but is pleased to watch the moon on high
Travelling where she from time to time enshrouds
Her head, and nothing loth her majesty
Renounces, till among the scattered clouds
One with its kindling edge declares that soon
Will reappear before the uplifted eye
A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,
To glide in open prospect through clear sky.
Pity that such a promise e'er should prove
False in the issue, that yon seeming space
Of sky should be in truth the steadfast face
Of a cloud flat and dense, through which must move
(By transit not unlike man's frequent doom)
The Wanderer lost in more determined gloom.

1846

XVI.

WHERE lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's creed,
A pitiable doom; for respite brief
A care more anxious, or a heavier grief?
Is he ungrateful, and doth little heed
God's bounty, soon forgotten; or indeed
Must Man, with labor born, awake to sorrow
When Flowers rejoice and Larks with rival speed
Spring from their nests to bid the Sun good morrow?
They mount for rapture, as their songs proclaim
Warbled in hearing both of earth and sky
But o'er the contrast wherefore heave a sigh?
Like those aspirants let us soar, — our aim,
Through life's worst trials, whether shocks or snares,
A happier, brighter, purer heaven than theirs.

1844.

POEMS,

COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR, IN THE SUMMER OF 1833.

[HAVING been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the author made these the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following series of Poems is a memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona; and back towards England, by Loch Awe, Inverary, Loch Goil-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfriesshire to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden, and homewards by Ullswater.]

I.

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels! that have grown
And spread as if ye knew that days might come
When ye would shelter in a happy home,
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown
To sue the God; but, haunting your green shade
All seasons through, is humbly pleased to braid
Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship, self-sown.

Farewell! no Minstrels now with harp new-strung
For summer wandering quiet their household bowers;
Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue
To cheer the Itinerant on whom she pours
Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors
Or, musing, sits forsaken halls among.

II.

Why should the Enthusiast, journeying through this Isle,
Repine as if his hour were come too late?
Not unprotected in her mouldering state,
Antiquity salutes him with a smile,
'Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocund toil,
And pleasure-grounds where Taste, refined Comate
Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate,
Far as she may, primeval Nature's style.
Fair land! by Time's parental love made free,
By Social Order's watchful arms embraced,
With unexampled union meet in thee,
For eye and mind, the present and the past;
With golden prospect for futurity,
If that be reverenced which ought to last.

III.

They called thee Merry England, in old time
A happy people won for thee that name,

With envy heard in many a distant clime;
And, spite of change, for me thou keep'st the same
Endearing title, a responsive chime
To the heart's fond belief; though some there are
Whose sterner judgments deem that word a snare
For inattentive Fancy, like the lime
Which foolish birds are caught with. Can, I ask,
This face of rural beauty be a mask
For discontent, and poverty, and crime;
These spreading towns a cloak for lawless will?
Forbid it, Heaven! — and MERRY ENGLAND still
Shall be thy rightful name, in prose and rhyme!

IV.

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK.

GRETA, what fearful listening! when huge stones
Rumble along thy bed, block after block:
Or, whirling with reiterated shock,
Combat, while darkness aggravates the groans:
But if thou (like Cocytus from the moans
Heard on his rueful margin) thence wert named
The Mourner, thy true nature was defamed,
And the habitual murmur that atones
For thy worst rage, forgotten. Oft as Spring
Decks, on thy sinuous banks, her thousand thrones
Seats of glad instinct and love's carolling,
The concert, for the happy, then may vie
With liveliest peals of birthday harmony;
To a grieved heart, the notes are benisons

V.

TO THE RIVER DERWENT.

AMONG the mountains were we nursed, loved Stream!
Thou near the eagle's nest, — within brief sail,
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,
Where thy deep voice could lull me! Faint the beam
Of human life when first allowed to gleam
On mortal notice. — Glory of the vale,
Such thy meek outset, with a crown, though frail,
Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam
Of thy soft breath! — Less vivid wreath entwined
Nemæan victor's brow; less bright was worn
Meed of some Roman chief, in triumph borne
With captives chained, and shedding from his car
The sunset splendors of a finished war
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind!

VI.

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH.

(Where the Author was born, and his Father's remains are laid.)

A POINT of life between my Parents' dust
And yours, my buried Little-ones! am I;
And to those graves looking habitually,
In kindred quiet I repose my trust.
Death to the innocent is more than just.

And, to the sinner, mercifully bent;
So may I hope, if truly I repent
And meekly bear the ills which bear I must:
And you, my Offspring! that do still remain,
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual pain
We breathed together for a moment's space,
The wrong, by love provoked, let love arraign,
And only love keep in your hearts a place

VII.

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKERMOUTH CASTLE

"THOU look'st upon me, and dost fondly think,
Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,
We, differing once so much, are now Compeers,
Prepared, when each has stood his time, to sink
Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link
United us; when thou, in boyish play,
Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey
To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink
Of light was there; — and thus did I, thy Tutor,
Make thy young thoughts acquainted with the grave;
While thou wert chasing the winged butterfly
Through my green courts; or climbing, a bold suitor,
Up to the flowers whose golden progeny
Still round my shattered brow in beauty wave."

VIII.

NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM.

THE cattle, crowding round this beverage clear
To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs have trod
The encircling turf into a barren clod,
Through which the waters creep, then disappear,
Born to be lost in Derwent, flowing near;
Yet, o'er the brink, and round the limestone cell
Of the pure spring, (they call it the "Nun's Well,"
Name that first struck by chance my startled ear,)
A tender Spirit broods, — the pensive Shade
Of ritual honors to this Fountain paid
By hooded Votaresses with saintly cheer;
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild
Looked down with pity upon eyes beguiled
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."

IX.

TO A FRIEND.

(On the Banks of the Derwent.)

PASTOR and Patriot! — at whose bidding rise
These modest walls, amid a flock that need,
For one who comes to watch them and to feed,
A fixed abode, — keep down presageful sighs.
Threats, which the unthinking only can despise,
Perplex the Church; but be thou firm, — be true

To thy first hope, and this good work pursue,
Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice
Dost thou prepare, whose sign will be the smoke
Of thy new hearth; and sooner shall its wreaths,
Mounting while earth her morning incense breathes,
From wandering fiends of air receive a yoke,
And straightway cease to aspire, than God disdain
This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

X.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

(Landing at the Mouth of the Derwent, Workington,

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed,
The Queen drew back the wimple that she wore
And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian shore
Her landing hailed, how touchingly she bowed!
And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud
Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darts,
When a soft summer gale at evening parts
The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)
She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian seer,
Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the strand,
With step prelusive to a long array
Of woes and degradations hand in hand,—
Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear
Stilled by the ensanguined block of Fotheringay!

XI.

STANZAS

SUGGESTED IN A STEAMBOAT OFF SAINT BEES' HEADS ON THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND.

If Life were slumber on a bed of down,
Toil unimposed, vicissitude unknown,
Sad were our lot: no hunter of the hare
Exults like him whose javelin from the lair
Has roused the lion; no one plucks the rose,
Whose proffered beauty in safe shelter blows
'Mid a trim garden's summer luxuries,
With joy like his who climbs, on hands and knees,
For some rare plant, yon Headland of St. Bees.

This independence upon oar and sail,
This new indifference to breeze or gale,
This straight-lined progress, furrowing a flat lea,
And regular as if locked in certainty,
Depress the hours. Up, Spirit of the storm!
That Courage may find something to perform;
That Fortitude, whose blood disdains to freeze
At Danger's bidding, may confront the seas,
Firm as the towering Headlands of St. Bees.

Dread cliff of Baruth! *that* wild wish may sleep.
Bold as if men and creatures of the deep

Breathed the same element; too many wrecks
Have struck thy sides, too many ghastly decks
Hast thou looked down upon, that such a thought
Should here be welcome, and in verse enwrought:
With thy stern aspect better far agrees
Utterance of thanks, that we have past with ease,
As millions thus shall do, the Headlands of St. Bees.

Yet, while each useful Art augments her store,
What boots the gain if Nature should lose more?
And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian place
In man's intelligence sublimed by grace?
When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian coast,
Tempestuous winds her holy errand crossed:
She knelt in prayer, — the waves their wrath appease;
And from her vow, well weighed in Heaven's decrees,
Rose, where she touched the strand, the Chantry of St. Bees.

"Cruel of heart were they, bloody of hand,"
Who in these wilds then struggled for command;
The strong were merciless, without hope the weak;
Till this bright Stranger came, fair as daybreak,
And as a cresset true that darts its length
Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength;
Guiding the mariner through troubled seas,
And cheering oft his peaceful reveries,
Like the fixed Light that crowns yon Headland of St. Bees.

To aid the Votaress, miracles believed
Wrought in men's minds, like miracles achieved
So piety took root; and Song might tell
What humanizing virtues near her cell
Sprang up, and spread their fragrance wide around
How savage bosoms melted at the sound
Of Gospel truth enchained in harmonies
Wafted o'er waves, or creeping through close trees,
From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.

When her sweet Voice, that instrument of love,
Was glorified, and took its place, above
The silent stars, among the angelic choir,
Her Chantry blazed with sacrilegious fire,
And perished utterly; but her good deeds
Had sown the spot that witnessed them with seeds
Which lay in earth expectant, till a breeze
With quickening impulse answered their mute pleas,
And lo! a *statelier* pile, the Abbey of St. Bees.

There are the naked clothed, the hungry fed;
And Charity extendeth to the dead
Her intercessions made for the soul's rest
Of tardy penitents; or for the best
Among the good (when love might else have slept,
Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept.
Thanks to the austere and simple Devotees,
Who, to that service bound by venial fees,
Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.

Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred ties
Woven out of passion's sharpest agonies,
Subdued, composed, and formalized by art,
To fix a wiser sorrow in the heart?
The prayer for them whose hour is past away
Says to the Living, profit while ye may!
A little part, and that the worst, he sees,
Who thinks that priestly cunning holds the keys
That best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.

Conscience, the timid being's inmost light,
Hope of the dawn and solace of the night,
Cheers these Recluses with a steady ray
In many an hour when judgment goes astray.
Ah! scorn not hastily their rule who try
Earth to despise and flesh to mortify,
Consume with zeal, in wingèd ecstasies
Of prayer and praise forget their rosaries,
Nor hear the loudest surges of St. Bees.

Yet none so prompt to succor and protect
The forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked
On the bare coast; nor do they grudge the boon
Which staff and cockle hat and sandal shoon
Claim for the pilgrim: and, though chidings sharp
May sometimes greet the strolling minstrel's harp,
It is not then when, swept with sportive ease,
It charms a feast-day throng of all degrees,
Brightening the archway of revered St. Bees.

How did the cliffs and echoing hills rejoice
What time the Benedictine Brethren's voice,
Imploring, or commanding with meet pride,
Summoned the Chiefs to lay their feuds aside,
And under one blest ensign serve the Lord
In Palestine. Advance, indignant Sword?
Flaming till thou from Painim hands release
That Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities
Nursed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.

But look we now to them whose minds from far
Follow the fortunes which they may not share.
While in Judæa Fancy loves to roam,
She helps to make a Holy Land at home:
The Star of Bethlehem from its sphere invites
To sound the crystal depth of maiden rights;
And wedded Life, through Scriptural mysteries,
Heavenward ascends with all her charities,
Taught by the hooded Celibates of St. Bees.

Nor be it e'er forgotten how by skill
Of cloistered Architects, free their souls to fill
With love of God, throughout the Land were raised
Churches, on whose symbolic beauty gazed
Peasant and mail-clad Chief with pious awe:
As at this day men seeing what they saw,
Or the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,
Aspire to more than earthly destinies;
Witness yon Pile that greets us from St. Bees.

Yet more; around those Churches gathered Towns
Safe from the feudal Castle's haughty frowns:
Peaceful abodes, where Justice might uphold
Her scales with even hand, and culture mould
The heart to pity, train the mind in care
For rules of life, sound as the Time could bear.
Nor dost thou fail, through abject love of ease,
Or hindrance raised by sordid purposes,
To bear thy part in this good work, St. Bees.

Who with the ploughshare clove the barren moors,
And to green meadows changed the swampy shores?
Thinned the rank woods; and for the cheerful grange
Made room where wolf and boar were used to range?
Who taught, and showed by deeds, that gentler chains
Should bind the vassal to his lord's domains?
The thoughtful Monks, intent their God to please,
For Christ's dear sake, by human sympathies
Poured from the bosom of thy Church, St. Bees!

But all availed not; by a mandate given
Through lawless will, the Brotherhood was driven
Forth from their cells; their ancient House laid low
In Reformation's sweeping overthrow.
But now once more the local Heart revives,
The inextinguishable Spirit strives.
O may that Power who hushed the stormy seas,
And cleared a way for the first Votaries
Prosper the new-born College of St. Bees!

Alas! the Genius of our age from Schools
Less humble draws her lessons, aims, and rules.
To Prowess guided by her insight keen
Matter and Spirit are as one machine;
Boastful Idolatress of formal skill,
She in her own would merge the Eternal will:
Better, if Reason's triumphs match with these,
Her flight before the bold credulities
That furthered the first teaching of St. Bees.*

1833.

XII.

IN THE CHANNEL, BETWEEN THE COAST OF CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN.

RANGING the heights of Scawfell or Black-comb,
In his lone course the Shepherd oft will pause,
And strive to fathom the mysterious laws
By which the clouds, arrayed in light or gloom,
On Mona settle, and the shapes assume
Of all her peaks and ridges. What he draws
From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the cause,
He will take with him to the silent tomb.
Or, by his fire, a child upon his knee,
Haply the untaught Philosopher may speak
Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory

* See Excursion, Seventh Part; and Ecclesiastical Sketches Second Part, near the beginning.

That satisfies the simple and the meek,
Blest in their pious ignorance, though weak
To cope with Sages undevoutly free.

XIII.

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN.

Bold words affirmed, in days when faith was strong
And doubts and scruples seldom teased the brain,
That no adventurer's bark had power to gain
These shores if he approached them bent on wrong;
For, suddenly up-conjured from the Main,
Mists rose to hide the Land,—that search, though long
And eager, might be still pursued in vain.
O Fancy, what an age was *that* for song!
That age, when not by *laws* inanimate,
As men believed, the waters were impelled,
The air controlled, the stars their courses held;
But element and orb on *acts* did wait
Of *Powers* endued with visible form, instinct
With will, and to their work by passion linked.

XIV.

Desire we past illusions to recall?
To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide
Truths whose thick veil Science has drawn aside?

No, — let this Age, high as she may install
In her esteem the thirst that wrought man's fall,
The universe is infinitely wide;
And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new wall
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,
Imaginative Faith! canst overleap,
In progress toward the fount of Love, — the throne
Of Power whose ministers the records keep
Of periods fixed, and laws established, less
Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

XV.

ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF MAN.

"Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori."

The feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn,
Even when they rose to check or to repel
Tides of aggressive war, oft served as well
Greedy ambition, armed to treat with scorn
Just limits; but yon Tower, whose smiles adorn
This perilous bay, stands clear of all offence;
Blest work it is of love and innocence,
A Tower of refuge built for the else forlorn.
Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,
Struggling for life, into its saving arms!
Spare, too, the human helpers! Do they stir
Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to die?

No; their dread service nerves the heart it warms,
And they are led by noble HILLARY.*

XVI.

BY THE SEA-SHORE, ISLE OF MAN.

WHY stand we gazing on the sparkling Brine,
With wonder smit by its transparency,
And all enraptured with its purity? —
Because the unstained, the clear, the crystalline,
Have ever in them something of benign;
Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,
A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye
Of a young maiden, only not divine.
Scarcely the hand forbears to dip its palm
For beverage drawn as from a mountain well
Temptation centres in the liquid Calm;
Our daily raiment seems no obstacle
To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea!
And revelling in long embrace with thee.†

* See Note.

† The sea-water on the coast of the Isle of Man is singularly pure and beautiful.

XVII.

ISLE OF MAN.

A YOUTH too certain of his power to wade
On the smooth bottom of this clear, bright sea,
To sight so shallow, with a bather's glee,
Leaped from this rock, and but for timely aid
He, by the alluring element betrayed,
Had perished. Then might Sea-nymphs (and with sighs
Of self-reproach) have chanted elegies
Bewailing his sad fate, when he was laid
In peaceful earth; for, doubtless, he was frank,
Utterly in himself devoid of guile;
Knew not the double-dealing of a smile;
Nor aught that makes men's promises a blank,
Or deadly snare: and he survives to bless
The Power that saved him in his strange distress.

XVIII.

ISLE OF MAN.

DID pangs of grief for lenient Time too keen,
Grief that devouring waves had caused, or guilt
Which they had witnessed, sway the man who built
This Homestead, placed where nothing could be seen,
Naught heard, of ocean troubled or serene?
A tired Ship-soldier on paternal land,

That o'er the channel holds august command,
The dwelling raised, — a veteran Marine.
He, in disgust, turned from the neighboring sea
To shun the memory of a listless life
That hung between two callings. May no strife
More hurtful here beset him, doomed though free,
Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his eye
Shrink from the daily sight of earth and sky!

XIX.

BY A RETIRED MARINER.

(A Friend of the Author.)

From early youth I ploughed the restless Main,
My mind as restless and as apt to change;
Through every clime and ocean did I range,
In hope at length a competence to gain;
For poor to Sea I went, and poor I still remain.
Year after year I strove, but strove in vain,
And hardships manifold did I endure,
For Fortune on me never deigned to smile;
Yet I at last a resting-place have found,
With just enough life's comforts to procure,
In a snug Cove on this our favored Isle,
A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts abound;
Then sure I have no reason to complain,
Though poor to Sea I went and poor I still remain

XX.

AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN.

(Supposed to be written by a Friend.)

BROKEN in fortune, but in mind entire
And sound in principle, I seek repose
Where ancient trees this convent-pile inclose,*
In ruin beautiful. When vain desire
Intrudes on peace, I pray the Eternal Sire
To cast a soul-subduing shade on me,
A gray-haired, pensive, thankful Refugee;
A shade, — but with some sparks of heavenly fire
Once to these cells vouchsafed. And when I note
The old Tower's brow yellowed as with the beams
Of sunset ever there, albeit streams
Of stormy weather-stains that semblance wrought,
I thank the silent Monitor, and say,
"Shine so, my aged brow, at all hours of the day!"

XXI.

TYNWALD HILL.

ONCE on the top of Tynwald's formal mound
(Still marked with green turf circles narrowing
Stage above stage) would sit this Island's King,
The laws to promulgate, enrobed and crowned;

* Rushen Abbey.

While, compassing the little mound around,
Degrees and Orders stood, each under each:
Now, like to things within fate's easiest reach,
The power is merged, the pomp a grave has found.
Off with yon cloud, old Snafell! that thine eye
Over three Realms may take its widest range;
And let, for them, thy fountains utter strange
Voices, thy winds break forth in prophecy,
If the whole State must suffer mortal change,
Like Mona's miniature of sovereignty.

XXII.

Despond who will, — *I* heard a voice exclaim,
"Though fierce the assault, and shattered the defence,
It cannot be that Britain's social frame,
The glorious work of time and providence,
Before a flying season's rash pretence
Should fall; that she, whose virtue put to shame,
When Europe prostrate lay, the Conqueror's aim,
Should perish, self-subverted. Black and dense
The cloud is; but brings *that* a day of doom
To Liberty? Her sun is up the while,
That orb whose beams round Saxon Alfred shone
Then laugh, ye innocent Vales! ye Streams, sweep on,
Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest Isle
Toss in the fanning wind a tumbler plume."

XXIII.

IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAG.

(During an Eclipse of the Sun, July 17.)

SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,
Appeared the Crag of Ailsa, ne'er did morn
With gleaming lights more gracefully adorn
His sides, or wreathe with mist his forehead high
Now, faintly darkening with the sun's eclipse,
Still is he seen, in lone sublimity,
Towering above the sea and little ships;
For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing by,
Each for her haven; with her freight of Care,
Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom looks
Into the secret of to-morrow's fare;
Though poor, yet rich, without the wealth of books
Or aught that watchful Love to Nature owes
For her mute Powers, fix'd Forms, or transient
Shows.

XXIV.

ON THE FRITH OF CLYDE.

(In a Steamboat.)

ARRAN! a single-crested Teneriffe,
A St. Helena next, — in shape and hue
Varying her crowded peaks and ridges blue;
Who but must covet a cloud-seat, or skiff
Built for the air, or wingèd Hippogriff,

That he might fly, where no one could pursue,
From this dull Monster and her sooty crew;
And, as a God, light on thy topmost cliff?
Impotent wish! which reason would despise
If the mind knew no union of extremes,
No natural bond between the boldest schemes
Ambition frames, and heart-humilities.
Beneath stern mountains many a soft vale lies,
And lofty springs give birth to lowly streams.

XXV.

ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE.

[See former series, Vol. III. p. 280.]

The captive Bird was gone; — to cliff or moor
Perchance had flown, delivered by the storm;
Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the worm:
Him found we not: but, climbing a tall tower,
There saw, impaved with rude fidelity
Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,
An Eagle with stretched wings, but beamless eye, —
An Eagle that could neitner wail nor soar.
Effigy of the vanished, — (shall I dare
To call thee so?) or symbol of fierce deeds
And of the towering courage which past times
Rejoiced in, — take, whate'er thou be, a share
Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes
That animate my way where'er it leads!

XXVI.

THE DUNOLLY EAGLE.

Not to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew;
But when a storm, on sea or mountain bred,
Came and delivered him, alone he sped
Into the castle-dungeon's darkest mew.
Now, near his master's house in open view
He dwells, and hears indignant tempests howl,
Kennelled and chained. Ye tame domestic fowl,
Beware of him! Thou, saucy cockatoo,
Look to thy plumage and thy life! — The roe,
Fleet as the west wind, is for *him* no quarry;
Balanced in ether he will never tarry,
Eyeing the sea's blue depths. Poor Bird! even so
Doth man of brother man a creature make
That clings to slavery for its own sad sake.

XXVII.

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN.

Oft have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,
Fragments of far-off melodies,
With ear not coveting the whole,
A part so charmed the pensive soul:

While a dark storm before my sight
Was yielding, on a mountain height
Loose vapors have I watched, that won
Prismatic colors from the sun;
Nor felt a wish that heaven would show
The image of its perfect bow.
What need, then, of these finished Strains?
Away with counterfeit Remains!
An abbey in its lone recess,
A temple of the wilderness,
Wrecks though they be, announce with feeling
The majesty of honest dealing.
Spirit of Ossian! if imbound
In language thou mayst yet be found.
If aught (intrusted to the pen
Or floating on the tongues of men,
Albeit shattered and impaired)
Subsist thy dignity to guard,
In concert with memorial claim
Of old gray stone, and high-born name
That cleaves to rock or pillared cave
Where moans the blast or beats the wave,
Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,
Interpret that Original,
And for presumptuous wrongs atone; —
Authentic words be given, or none!

Time is not blind; — yet he, who spares
Pyramid pointing to the stars,
Hath preyed with ruthless appetite

On all that marked the primal flight
Of the poetic ecstasy
Into the land of mystery.
No tongue is able to rehearse
One measure, Orpheus! of thy verse;
Musæus, stationed with his lyre
Supreme among the Elysian choir,
Is, for the dwellers upon earth,
Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.
Why grieve for these, though past away
The music, and extinct the lay?
When thousands, by severer doom,
Full early to the silent tomb
Have sunk, at Nature's call; or strayed
From hope and promise, self-betrayed;
The garland withering on their brows;
Stung with remorse for broken vows;
Frantic, — else how might they rejoice?
And friendless, by their own sad choice!

Hail, Bards of mightier grasp! on you
I chiefly call, the chosen Few,
Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,
Who faltered not, nor turned aside;
Whose lofty genius could survive
Privation, under sorrow thrive;
In whom the fiery Muse revered
The symbol of a snow-white beard,
Bedewed with meditative tears
Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul! though distant times
Produced you nursed in various climes,
Ye, when the orb of life had waned,
A plenitude of love retained:
Hence, while in you each sad regret
By corresponding hope was met,
Ye lingered among human kind,
Sweet voices for the passing wind;
Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,
Though smiling on the last hill-top!
Such to the tender-hearted maid
Even ere her joys begin to fade,
Such, haply, to the rugged chief
By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief,
Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,
Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,
The Son of Fingal; such was blind
Mæonides of ampler mind;
Such Milton, to the fountain-head
Of glory by Urania led!

1824.

XXVIII.

CAVE OF STAFFA.

We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd.
Not one of us has felt the far-famed sight;

How *could* we feel it? each the other's blight,
Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.
O for those motions only that invite
The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave
By the breeze entered, and wave after wave
Softly embosoming the timid light!
And by *one* Votary, who at will might stand
Gazing, and take into his mind and heart,
With undistracted reverence, the effect
Of those proportions where the almighty hand
That made the worlds, the sovereign Architect,
Has deigned to work as if with human Art!

XXIX.

CAVE OF STAFFA.

(After the Crowd had departed.)

THANKS for the lessons of this spot, — fit school
For the presumptuous thoughts that would assign
Mechanic laws to agency divine;
And, measuring heaven by earth, would overrule
Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule,
Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed,
Might seem designed to humble man, when proud
Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.
Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic weight
Of tide and tempest on that Structure's base,
And flashing to that Structure's topmost height,
Ocean has proved its strength, and of its grace

In calms is conscious, finding for his freight
Of softest music some responsive place.

XXX.

CAVE OF STAFFA.

Ye shadowy Beings, that have rights and claims
In every cell of Fingal's mystic Grot,
Where are ye? Driven or venturing to the spot,
Our fathers glimpses caught of your thin Frames,
And, by your mien and bearing, knew your names;
And they could hear *his* ghostly song who trod
Earth, till the flesh lay on him like a load,
While he struck his desolate harp without hopes
or aims.
Vanished ye are, but subject to recall;
Why keep *we* else the instincts whose dread law
Ruled here of yore, till what men felt they saw,
Not by black arts but magic natural!
If eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,
Yon light shapes forth a Bard, that shade a Chief.

XXXI.

FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE PILLARS AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE.

Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,
Children of Summer! Ye fresh Flowers that brave

What Summer here escapes not, the fierce wave,
And whole artillery of the western blast,
Battering the Temple's front, its long-drawn nave
Smiting, as if each moment were their last.
But ye, bright Flowers, on frieze and architrave
Survive, and once again the Pile stands fast:
Calm as the Universe, from specular towers
Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure
With mute astonishment, it stands sustained
Through every part in symmetry, to endure,
Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his hours,
As the Supreme Artificer ordained.

XXXII.

IONA.

On to Iona! — What can she afford
To *us* save matter for a thoughtful sigh,
Heaved over ruin with stability
In urgent contrast? To diffuse the Word
(Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and Time's Lord)
Her Temples rose, 'mid pagan gloom; but why
Even for a moment, has our verse deplored
Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their destiny?
And when, subjected to a common doom
Of mutability, those far-famed Piles
Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,
Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,

Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,
While heaven's vast sea of voices chants their
praise.

XXXIII.

IONA.

(Upon Landing.)

How sad a welcome! To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store
Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the shore
Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir,
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.
Yet is yon neat, trim church a grateful speck
Of novelty amid the sacred wreck
Strewn far and wide. Think, proud Philosopher!
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the West,
Still on her sons the beams of mercy shine;
And "hopes, perhaps more heavenly bright than
thine,
A grace by thee unsought and unpossest,
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine,
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

XXXIV.

THE BLACK STONES OF IONA.

[See Martin's Voyage among the Western Isles.]

HERE on their knees men swore: the stones were black,
Black in the people's minds and words, yet they
Were at that time, as now, in color gray.
But what is color, if upon the rack
Of conscience souls are placed by deeds that lack
Concord with oaths? What differ night and day
Then, when before the Perjured on his way
Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance crack
Above his head uplifted in vain prayer
To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead whom
He had insulted, — Peasant, King, or Thane?
Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets a doom;
And, from invisible worlds at need laid bare,
Come links for social order's awful chain.

XXXV.

HOMEWARD we turn. Isle of Columba's Cell,
Where Christian piety's soul-cheering spark
(Kindled from Heaven between the light and dark
Of time) shone like the morning-star, farewell!—
And fare thee well, to Fancy visible,
Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved sea-mark

For many a voyage made in her swift bark,
When with more hues than in the rainbow dwell
Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold,
Extracting from clear skies and air serene,
And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil,
That thickens, spreads, and, mingling fold with fold,
Makes known, when thou no longer canst be seen,
Thy whereabout, to warn the approaching sail.

XXXVI.

GREENOCK.

Per me si va nella Città dolente.

We have not passed into a doleful City,
We who were led to-day down a grim dell,
By some too boldly named "the Jaws of Hell":
Where be the wretched ones, the sights for pity?
These crowded streets resound no plaintive ditty:—
As from the hive where bees in summer dwell,
Sorrow seems here excluded; and that knell,
It neither damps the gay, nor checks the witty.
Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre,
Whose merchants Princes were, whose decks were thrones;
Soon may the punctual sea in vain respire
To serve thy need, in union with that Clyde
Whose nursling current brawls o'er mossy stones
The poor, the lonely herdsman's joy and pride.

XXXVII.

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride
Towards a low roof with green trees half concealed,
"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that 's the very field
Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy." Far and wide
A plain below stretched seaward, while, descried
Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose;
And, by that simple notice, the repose
Of earth, sky, sea, and air was vivified.
Beneath "the random *bield* of clod or stone,"
Myriads of daisies have shone forth in flower
Near the lark's nest, and in their natural hour
Have passed away; less happy than the one
That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died to prove
The tender charm of poetry and love.

XXXVIII.

THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND.

EDEN! till now thy beauty had I viewed
By glimpses only, and confess with shame
That verse of mine, whate'er its varying mood,
Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet name:
Yet fetched from Paradise that honor came,
Rightfully borne; for Nature gives thee flowers

That have no rivals among British bowers,
And thy bold rocks are worthy of their fame.
Measuring thy course, fair Stream! at length I pay
To my life's neighbor dues of neighborhood;
But I have traced thee on thy winding way
With pleasure sometimes by this thought restrained,
For things far off we toil, while many a good
Not sought, because too near, is never gained.

XXXIX.

MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD,

(By Nollekens,)

In Wetheral Church, near Corby, on the Banks of the Eden.

STRETCHED on the dying Mother's lap lies dead
Her new-born Babe; dire ending of bright hope!
But Sculpture here, with the divinest scope
Of luminous faith, heavenward hath raised that head
So patiently; and through one hand has spread
A touch so tender for the insensate Child, —
(Earth's lingering love to parting reconciled,
Brief parting, for the spirit is all but fled,) —
That we, who contemplate the turns of life
Through this still medium, are consoled and cheered;
Feel with the Mother, think the severed Wife
Is less to be lamented than revered;

And own that Art, triumphant over strife
And pain, hath powers to Eternity endeared.

XL.

SUGGESTED BY THE FOREGOING.

TRANQUILLITY! the sovereign aim wert thou
In heathen schools of philosophic lore;
Heart-stricken by stern destiny, of yore
The Tragic Muse thee served with thoughtful vow
And what of hope Elysium could allow
Was fondly seized by Sculpture, to restore
Peace to the Mourner. But when He who wore
The crown of thorns around his bleeding brow
Warmed our sad being with celestial light,
Then Arts which still had drawn a softening grace
From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,
Communed with that Idea face to face:
And move around it now as planets run,
Each in its orbit, round the central Sun.

XLI.

NUNNERY.

THE floods are roused, and will not soon be weary;
Down from the Pennine Alps* how fiercely sweeps

* The chain of Crossfell.

Croglin, the stately Eden's tributary!
He raves, or through some moody passage creeps
Plotting new mischief, — out again he leaps
Into broad light, and sends, through regions airy,
That voice which soothed the Nuns while on the steeps
They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful Mary.
That union ceased: then, cleaving easy walks
Through crags, and smoothing paths beset with danger,
Came studious Taste; and many a pensive stranger
Dreams on the banks, and to the river talks.
What change shall happen next to Nunnery Dell?
Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!

XLII.

STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAILWAYS.

Motions and Means, on land and sea at war
With old poetic feeling, not for this
Shall ye, by Poets even, be judged amiss!
Nor shall your presence, howsoe'er it mar
The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar
To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense
Of future change, that point of vision, whence
May be discovered what in soul ye are.
In spite of all that beauty may disown
In your harsh features, Nature doth embrace
Her lawful offspring in Man's art; and Time,

Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother Space,
Accepts from your bold hands the proffered crown
Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime.

XLIII.

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG MEG AND HER DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE RIVER EDEN.

A WEIGHT of awe, not easy to be borne,
Fell suddenly upon my Spirit, — cast
From the dread bosom of the unknown past,
When first I saw that family forlorn.
Speak Thou, whose massy strength and stature scorn
The power of years, — preëminent, and placed
Apart, to overlook the circle vast, —
Speak, Giant-mother! tell it to the Morn
While she dispels the cumbrous shades of Night;
Let the Moon hear, emerging from a cloud;
At whose behest uprose on British ground
That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round
Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the infinite,
The inviolable God, that tames the proud! *

* See Note.

XLIV.

LOWTHER.

LOWTHER! in thy majestic Pile are seen
Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord
With the baronial castle's sterner mien;
Union significant of God adored,
And charters won and guarded by the sword
Of ancient honor; whence that goodly state
Of polity which wise men venerate,
And will maintain, if God his help afford.
Hourly the democratic torrent swells;
For airy promises and hopes suborned
The strength of backward-looking thoughts is scorned.
Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,
With what ye symbolize; authentic Story
Will say, Ye disappeared with England's Glory!

XLV.

TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE

"Magistratus indicat virum."

LONSDALE! it were unworthy of a Guest,
Whose heart with gratitude to thee inclines,
If he should speak, by fancy touched, of signs
On thy Abode harmoniously imprest,
Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest
How in thy mind and moral frame agree
Fortitude, and that Christian Charity

Which, filling, consecrates the human breast.
And if the Motto on thy 'scutcheon teach
With truth, THE MAGISTRACY SHOWS THE MAN
That searching test thy public course has stood;
As will be owned alike by bad and good,
Soon as the measuring of life's little span
Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's reach.*

XLVI.

THE SOMNAMBULIST.

LIST, ye who pass by Lyulph's Tower†
At eve; how softly then
Doth Aira-force, that torrent hoarse,
Speak from the woody glen!
Fit music for a solemn vale!
And holier seems the ground
To him who catches on the gale
The spirit of a mournful tale,
Embodied in the sound.

Not far from that fair site whereon
The Pleasure-house is reared,

* See Note.

† A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. FORCE is the word used in the Lake District for Waterfall.

As story says, in antique days
A stern-browed house appeared;
Foil to a Jewel rich in light
There set, and guarded well;
Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,
Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight
Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,
To make this Gem their own,
Came Barons bold, with store of gold,
And Knights of high renown;
But one she prized, and only one;
Sir Eglamore was he;
Full happy season, when was known,
Ye Dales and Hills! to you alone,
Their mutual loyalty, —

Known chiefly, Aira! to thy glen,
Thy brook, and bowers of holly;
Where Passion caught what Nature taught,
That all but love is folly;
Where Fact with Fancy stooped to play;
Doubt came not, nor regret,
To trouble hours that winged their way,
As if through an immortal day
Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long
Sequestered with repose;

Best throve the fire of chaste desire,
Fanned by the breath of foes.
"A conquering lance is beauty's test,
And proves the Lover true";
So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed
The drooping Emma to his breast,
And looked a blind adieu.

They parted. — Well with him it fared
Through wide-spread regions errant;
A knight of proof in love's behoof,
The thirst of fame his warrant:
And she her happiness can build
On woman's quiet hours;
Though faint, compared with spear and shield,
The solace beads and masses yield,
And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard
Her Champion's praise recounted;
Though brain would swim, and eyes grow dim,
And high her blushes mounted;
Or when a bold heroic lay
She warbled from full heart;
Delightful blossoms for the *May*
Of absence! but they will not stay,
Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills
Whatever path he chooses;

As if his orb, that owns no curb,
Received the light hers loses.
He comes not back; an ampler space
Requires for nobler deeds;
He ranges on from place to place,
Till of his doings is no trace,
But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past
Her spirit finds its centre;
Clear sight she has of what he was,
And that would now content her.
"Still is he my devoted Knight?"
The tear in answer flows;
Month falls on month with heavier weight
Day sickens round her, and the night
Is empty of repose.

In sleep she sometimes walked abroad,
Deep sighs with quick words blending,
Like that pale Queen whose hands are seen
With fancied spots contending;
But *she* is innocent of blood,—
The moon is not more pure
That shines aloft, while through the wood
She thrids her way, the sounding Flood
Her melancholy lure!

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,
And owls alone are waking,

In white arrayed, glides on the Maid,
The downward pathway taking,
That leads her to the torrent's side
And to a holly bower;
By whom on this still night descried?
By whom in that lone place espied?
By thee, Sir Eglamore!

A wandering Ghost, so thinks the Knight,
His coming step has thwarted,
Beneath the boughs that heard their vows,
Within whose shade they parted.
Hush, hush, the busy Sleeper see!
Perplexed her fingers seem,
As if they from the holly-tree
Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly
Flung from her to the stream.

What means the Spectre? Why intent
To violate the Tree,
Thought Eglamore, by which I swore
Unfading constancy?
Here am I, and to-morrow's sun
To her I left shall prove
That bliss is ne'er so surely won
As when a circuit has been run
Of valor, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood
He moved with stealthy pace;

And, drawing nigh, with his living eye,
He recognized the face;
And whispers caught, and speeches small,
Some to the green-leaved tree,
Some muttered to the torrent-fall; —
"Roar on, and bring him with thy call;
I heard, and so may he!"

Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew
If Emma's Ghost it were,
Or boding Shade, or if the Maid
Her very self stood there.
He touched; what followed who shall tell?
The soft touch snapped the thread
Of slumber, — shrieking back she fell,
And the Stream whirled her down the dell
Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the Knight! — when on firm ground
The rescued Maiden lay,
Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,
Confusion passed away;
She heard, ere to the throne of grace
Her faithful Spirit flew,
His voice, — beheld his speaking face;
And, dying from his own embrace,
She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life:
Brief words may speak the rest:

Within the dell he built a cell,
And there was Sorrow's guest;
In hermit's weeds repose he found,
From vain temptations free;
Beside the torrent dwelling, — bound
By one deep, heart-controlling sound,
And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,
Nor fear memorial lays,
Where clouds that spread in solemn shade
Are edged with golden rays!
Dear art thou to the light of heaven,
Though minister of sorrow;
Sweet is thy voice at pensive even;
And thou, in lovers' hearts forgiven,
Shalt take thy place with Yarrow!

1833.

XLVII.

TO CORDELIA M———.

Hallsteads, Ullswater.

Not in the mines beyond the western main,
You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,
Which a fine skill, of Indian growth, has wrought
Into this flexible yet faithful Chain;
Nor is it silver of romantic Spain;
But from our loved Helvellyn's depths was brought

Our own domestic mountain. Thing and thought
Mix strangely; trifles light, and partly vain,
Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler being:
Yes, Lady, while about your neck is wound
(Your casual glance oft meeting) this bright cord,
What witchery, for pure gifts of inward seeing,
Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's Lord,
For precious tremblings in your bosom found!

XLVIII.

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
While a fair region round the traveller lies
Which he forbears again to look upon;
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
Let us break off all commerce with the Muse:
With Thought and Love companions of our way,
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION.

I.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

"Why, Willliam, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books?—that light bequeathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply: —

"The eye, — it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the year be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

"Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

1798

II.

THE TABLES TURNED.

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you 'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long, green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 't is a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There 's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless,—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things —
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

1798

III.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 't is my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure: —
But the least motion which they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

1798.

IV.

A CHARACTER.

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find space
For so many strange contrasts in one human face
There 's thought and no thought, and there 's paleness and bloom,
And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.

There 's weakness, and strength both redundant and vain ;
Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain
Could pierce through a temper that 's soft to disease,
Would be rational peace, — a philosopher's ease.

There 's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,
And attention full ten times as much as there needs;
Pride where there 's no envy, there 's so much of joy;
And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.

There 's freedom, and sometimes a diffident stare
Of shame scarcely seeming to know that she 's there;
There 's virtue, the title it surely may claim,
Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name.

This picture from nature may seem to depart,
Yet the Man would at once run away with your heart;
And I for five centuries right gladly would be
Such an odd, such a kind, happy creature as he.

1800.

V.

TO MY SISTER.

It is the first mild day of March :
Each minute sweeter than before

The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister! ('t is a wish of mine,)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you; — and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress;
And bring no book: for this one day
We 'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar:
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth
— It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason:

Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey:
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We 'll frame the measure of our souls:
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister! come, I pray.
With speed put on your woodland dress,
And bring no book: for this one day
We 'll give to idleness.

1798.

VI.

SIMON LEE,

THE OLD HUNTSMAN:

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor Hall,
An old Man dwells, a little man, —
'T is said he once was tall.

Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo bandied, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled, and was stone-blind.
And still there 's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices!

But O the heavy change! — bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.
His Master 's dead, — and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead, —
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one:
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Inclosed when he was stronger;
But what to them avails the land
Which he can till no longer?

Oft, working by her Husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labor could not wean them,
'T is little, very little, all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.

My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you 've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it:
It is no tale; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you 'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand;
So vain was his endeavor,
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked for ever.

"You 're overtasked, good Simon Lee.
Give me your tool," to him I said;
And at the word, right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old Man so long
And vainly had endeavored.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
— I 've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning ;
Alas ! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

1798.

VII.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY,

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

The Reader must be apprised, that the stoves in North Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse !
Let me have the song of the kettle ;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of that horse
That gallops away with such fury and force
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

See that Fly, — a disconsolate creature ! perhaps
A child of the field or the grove:
And, sorry for him ! the dull, treacherous heat

Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ!
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands, like a traveller bemazed!
The best of his skill he has tried;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put forth
To the east and the west, to the south and the north,
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh!
His eyesight and hearing are lost;
Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws;
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him, — while
Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love;
As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,
As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,
And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small, helpless
Thing!
Thy life I would gladly sustain
Till summer come up from the south, and, with
crowds
Of thy brethren, a march thou shouldst sound
through the clouds,
And back to the forests again!

1799.

VIII.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

Art thou a Statist, in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred?
First learn to love one living man;
Then mayst thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou? — draw not nigh!
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
A rosy Man, right plump to see?
Approach yet, Doctor, not too near:
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
A Soldier and no man of chaff?
Welcome! — but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? — one all eyes,
Philosopher! — a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
O turn aside, — and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
Thy ever-dwindling soul away!

A Moralist perchance appears;
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor sod
And he has neither eyes nor ears;
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small;
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the latch;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is he, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet-brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noonday grove;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,
The harvest of a quiet eye,
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land,
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

— Come hither in thy hour of strength;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!
Here stretch thy body at full length;
Or build thy house upon this grave.

1799

IX.

TO THE DAISY.

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is everywhere,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through, the heir
Of joy and sorrow, —
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,
Does little on his memory rest,
Or on his reason,
And thou wouldst teach him how to find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind
And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,
Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical
In peace fulfilling.

1803.

X.

MATTHEW

In the School of ——— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the Author wrote the following lines.

If Nature, for a favorite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears,
In such diversity of hue,
Its history of two hundred years.

When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool;

Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up,—
He felt with spirit so profound.

Thou Soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?

1799.

XI.

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray;

As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun;
Then, from thy breast, what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn
Such colors, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,

And, to the churchyard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

"A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight!

"No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

"There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;

I looked at her, and looked again:
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

1798.

XII.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer's noon;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here, beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old man replied,
The gray-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears;
How merrily it goes!
'T will murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

"Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away,
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

"With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free:

"But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

"If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone;
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains!
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains;

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead,
I'll be a son to thee!"
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

1798.

XIII.

PERSONAL TALK.

I.

I AM not one who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk, —
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbors, daily, weekly, in my sight:
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with chalk

Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night.
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II.

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen and see,
And with a living pleasure we describe;
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
The languid mind into activity.
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee,
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."
Even be it so: yet still among your tribe,
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me!
Children are blest, and powerful; their world lies
More justly balanced; partly at their feet,
And part far from them: — sweetest melodies
Are those that are by distance made more sweet;
Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,
He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

III.

Wings have we, — and as far as we can go
We may find pleasure: wilderness and wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.

Dreams, books, are each a world; and books, we
know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good:
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear;
Two shall be named, preëminently dear, —
The gentle Lady married to the Moor,
And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

IV.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote
From evil-speaking; rancor, never sought,
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
Smooth passions, smooth discourses, and joyous
thought:
And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceable.
Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares, —
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!
Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

XIV.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS.

Discourse was deemed Man's noblest attribute,
And written words the glory of his hand;
Then followed Printing with enlarged command
For thought, — dominion vast and absolute
For spreading truth, and making love expand.
Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute
Must lackey a dumb Art that best can suit
The taste of this once-intellectual Land.
A backward movement surely have we here
From manhood, back to childhood; for the age,
Back towards caverned life's first rude career.
Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear
Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower stage!

1846

XV.

TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND

(AN AGRICULTURIST.)

Composed while we were laboring together in his pleasure ground.

Spade! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands,
And shaped these pleasant walks by Emont's side,

Thou art a tool of honor in my hands,
I press thee, through the yielding soil, with pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know;
Long hast Thou served a man to reason true,
Whose life combines the best of high and low,
The laboring many and the resting few;

Health, meekness, ardor, quietness secure,
And industry of body and of mind;
And elegant enjoyments, that are pure
As nature is, — too pure to be refined.

Here often hast thou heard the Poet sing
In concord with his river murmuring by
Or in some silent field, while timid spring
Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit thee when death has laid
Low in the darksome cell thine own dear lord?
That man will have a trophy, humble Spade!
A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part
False praise from true, or greater from the less,
Thee will he welcome to his hand and heart,
Thou monument of peaceful happiness!

He will not dread with thee a toilsome day, —
Thee, his loved servant, his inspiring mate!

And when thou art past service, worn away,
No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn;
An *heir-loom* in his cottage wilt thou be; —
High will he hang thee up, well pleased to adorn
His rustic chimney with the last of thee!

1834

XVI.

A NIGHT THOUGHT.

Lo! where the Moon along the sky
Sails with her happy destiny;
Oft is she hid from mortal eye,
Or dimly seen,
But when the clouds asunder fly,
How bright her mien!

Far different we, — a froward race;
Thousands, though rich in Fortune's grace,
With cherished sullenness of pace
Their way pursue,
Ingrates that wear a smileless face
The whole year through.

If kindred humors e'er would make
My spirit droop for drooping's sake,

From Fancy following in thy wake,
Bright ship of heaven!
A counter impulse let me take,
And be forgiven.

XVII.

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVORITE DOG.

On his morning rounds, the Master
Goes to learn how all things fare;
Searches pasture after pasture,
Sheep and cattle eyes with care;
And, for silence or for talk,
He hath comrades in his walk;
Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed

See a hare before him started!
Off they fly in earnest chase;
Every dog is eager-hearted,
All the four are in the race:
And the hare whom they pursue
Knows from instinct what to do;
Her hope is near: no turn she makes;
But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted
Thinly by a one night's frost;
But the nimble hare hath trusted
To the ice, and safely crossed;
She hath crossed, and without heed
All are following at full speed,
When, lo! the ice, so thinly spread,
Breaks—and the greyhound, DART, is overhead!

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW,—
See them cleaving to the sport!
MUSIC has no heart to follow,
Little MUSIC, she stops short.
She hath neither wish nor heart,
Hers is now another part:
A loving creature she, and brave,
And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,
Very hands as you would say!
And afflicting moans she fetches,
As he breaks the ice away.
For herself she has no fears,—
Him alone she sees and hears,—
Makes efforts with complainings; nor gives o er,
Until her fellow sinks to reappear no more.

1805.

XVIII.

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

Lie here, without a record of thy worth,
Beneath a covering of the common earth!
It is not from unwillingness to praise,
Or want of love, that here no stone we raise;
More thou deserv'st; but *this* man gives to man,
Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.
Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
Shall find thee through all changes of the year:
This oak points out thy grave; the silent tree
Will gladly stand a monument to thee.

We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past;
And willingly have laid thee here at last:
For thou hadst lived till everything that cheers
In thee had yielded to the weight of years;
Extreme old age had wasted thee away,
And left thee but a glimmering of the day;
Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—
I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.
It came, and we were glad: yet tears were shed
Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead

Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share;
But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
Found scarcely anywhere in like degree
For love, that comes wherever life and sense
Are given by God, in thee was most intense;
A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
A tender sympathy, which did thee bind
Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:
Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
A soul of love, love's intellectual law: —
Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame;
Our tears from passion and from reason came,
And therefore shalt thou be an honored name!

1805.

XIX.

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox;
He halts, — and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks:
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green

The Dog is not of mountain breed;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy;
With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry:
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height;
Nor shout nor whistle strikes his ear;
What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps till June December's snows;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn * below!
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land, —
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere;
Thither the rainbow comes, the cloud,
And mists that spread the flying shroud;
And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past;
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

* Tarn is a *small* Mere or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

Not free from boding thoughts, awhile
The Shepherd stood; then makes his way
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
As quickly as he may;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground.
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear!
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear:
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell!
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side:

How nourished here through such long time
He knows who gave that love sublime,
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate!

1805.

XX.

ODE TO DUTY.

"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eò perductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim.'

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love,
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe,
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot;
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:

Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads,
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
O, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live
1805.

XXI.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

WHO is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
— It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavors are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright:
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care:
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable, — because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
— 'T is he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labors good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
— Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow, on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a Lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
— He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love: —
'T is, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought of in obscurity, —
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,

Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead, unprofitable name,
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause —
This is the happy Warrior; this is he
That every Man in arms should wish to be.

1806.

XXII.

THE FORCE OF PRAYER;

OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

A TRADITON.

"What is good for a bootless bene?"
With these dark words begins my Tale;
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
When Prayer is of no avail?

* See the White Doe of Rylstone

"What is good for a bootless bene?"
The Falconer to the Lady said;
And she made answer, "ENDLESS SORROW!"
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,
And from the look of the Falconer's eye;
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

— Young Romilly through Barden woods
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride!
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

The striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore:
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee, — for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were
steep? —
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking sorrow:
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death: —
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow:
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave;
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave!

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, "Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately Priory!"

The stately Priory was reared;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at even-song.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
That looked not for relief!
But slowly did her succor come,
And a patience to her grief.

O, there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our friend!

1808.

XXIII.

A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION;

OR, CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE SEA-SHORE

The Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair,
Mustering a face of haughty sovereignty,
To aid a covert purpose, cried: "O ye

Approaching Waters of the deep, that share
With this green isle my fortunes, come not where
Your Master's throne is set." — Deaf was the Sea;
Her waves rolled on, respecting his decree
Less than they heed a breath of wanton air.
Then Canute, rising from the invaded throne,
Said to his servile Courtiers: "Poor the reach,
The undisguised extent, of mortal sway!
He only is a King, and he alone
Deserves the name, (this truth the billows preach,)
Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and heaven
obey."

This just reproof the prosperous Dane
Drew from the influx of the main,
For some whose rugged northern mouths would
strain
At Oriental flattery;
And Canute (fact more worthy to be known)
From that time forth did for his brows disown
The ostentatious symbol of a crown;
Esteeming earthly royalty
Contemptible as vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,
Rich theme of England's fondest praise,
Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken;
To cheer the remnant of his host
When he was driven from coast to coast,
Distressed and harassed, but with mind unbroken:

"My faithful followers, lo! the tide is spent
That rose, and steadily advanced to fill
The shores and channels, working Nature's will
Among the mazy streams that backward went,
And in the sluggish pools where ships are pent:
And now, his task performed, the flood stands still
At the green base of many an inland hill,
In placid beauty and sublime content!
Such the repose that sage and hero find;
Such measured rest the sedulous and good
Of humbler name; whose souls do, like the flood
Of Ocean, press right on; or gently wind,
Neither to be diverted nor withstood,
Until they reach the bounds by Heaven assigned."

1816.

XXIV.

"*A* LITTLE *onward lend thy guiding hand*
To these dark steps, a little further on!"
— What trick of memory to *my* voice hath brought
This mournful iteration? For though Time,
The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered, on this brow
Planting his favorite silver diadem,
Nor he, nor minister of his, intent
To run before him, hath enrolled me yet,
Though not unmenaced, among those who lean

Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.
— O my own Dora, my belovèd child!
Should that day come — but hark! the birds salute
The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the east;
For me, thy natural leader, once again
Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst
A tottering infant, with compliant stoop
From flower to flower supported; but to curb
Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o er the lawn,
Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge
Of foaming torrents. — From thy orisons
Come forth; and, while the morning air is yet
Transparent as the soul of innocent youth,
Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy way,
And now precede thee, winding to and fro,
Till we by perseverance gain the top
Of some smooth ridge, whose brink precipitous
Kindles intense desire for powers withheld
From this corporeal frame; whereon who stands
Is seized with strong incitement to push forth
His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge — dread thought!
For pastime plunge — into the "abrupt abyss,"
Where ravens spread their plumy vans, at ease!

And yet more gladly thee would I conduct
Through woods and spacious forests, — to behold
There, how the Original of human art,
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and erects
Her temples, fearless for the stately work,

Though waves, to every breeze, its high-arched
roof,
And storms the pillars rock. But we such schools
Of reverential awe will chiefly seek
In the still summer noon, while beams of light,
Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond
Traceably gliding through the dusk, recall
To mind the living presences of nuns;
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom
Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they serve,
To Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, espoused.

Now also shall the page of classic lore,
To these glad eyes from bondage freed, again
Be open; and the book of Holy Writ,
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield
To heights more glorious still, and into shades
More awful, where, advancing hand in hand,
We may be taught, O Darling of my care!
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,
And consecrate our lives to truth and love.

1816.

XXV.

ODE TO LYCORIS.

MAY, 1817.

I.

AN age hath been when Earth was proud
Of lustre too intense
To be sustained; and Mortals bowed
The front in self-defence
Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed,
Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed
While on the wing the Urchin played,
Could fearlessly approach the shade?
Enough for one soft vernal day,
If I, a bard of ebbing time,
And nurtured in a fickle clime,
May haunt this hornèd bay;
Whose amorous water multiplies
The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes;
And smooths her liquid breast,—to show
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
White as the pair that slid along the plains
Of heaven, when Venus held the reins!

II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn
Brushed by the owlet's wing;
Then Twilight is preferred to Dawn,

And Autumn to the Spring.
Sad fancies do we then affect,
In luxury of disrespect
To our own prodigal excess
Of too familiar happiness.
Lycoris (if such name befit
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)
When Nature marks the year's decline,
Be ours to welcome it;
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
Before the path of milder suns;
Pleased while the sylvan world displays
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
Of the resplendent miracle.

III.

But something whispers to my heart
That, as we downward tend,
Lycoris! life requires an *art*
To which our souls must bend;
A skill—to balance and supply;
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
As soon it must, a sense to sip,
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
Then welcome, above all, the Guest
Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,
Seem to recall the Deity
Of youth into the breast:
May pensive Autumn ne'er present

A claim to her disparagement!
While blossoms and the budding spray
Inspire us in our own decay;
Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
Be hopeful Spring the favorite of the Soul!

XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

ENOUGH of climbing toil! — Ambition treads
Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep and rough,
Or slippery even to peril! and each step,
As we for most uncertain recompense
Mount toward the empire of the fickle clouds,
Each weary step, dwarfing the world below,
Induces, for its old, familiar sights,
Unacceptable feelings of contempt,
With wonder mixed, — that Man could e'er be tied,
In anxious bondage, to such nice array
And formal fellowship of petty things!
Oh! 't is the *heart* that magnifies this life,
Making a truth and beauty of her own;
And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing shades,
And gurgling rills assist her in the work
More efficaciously than realms outspread,
As in a map, before the adventurer's gaze, —
Ocean and Earth contending for regard.

The umbrageous woods are left — how far beneath!
But lo! where darkness seems to guard the mouth
Of yon wild cave, whose jaggèd brows are fringed
With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still
And sultry air depending motionless.
Yet cool the space within, and not uncheered
(As whoso enters shall erelong perceive)
By stealthy influx of the timid day
Mingling with night, such twilight to compose
As Numa loved; when, in the Egerian grot,
From the sage Nymph appearing at his wish,
He gained whate'er a regal mind might ask,
Or need, of counsel breathed through lips divine.

Long as the heat shall rage, let that dim cave
Protect us, there deciphering as we may
Diluvian records; or the signs of Earth
Interpreting; or counting for old Time
His minutes, by reiterated drops,
Audible tears, from some invisible source
That deepens upon fancy, — more and more
Drawn toward the centre whence those sighs creep forth
To awe the lightness of humanity.
Or, shutting up thyself within thyself,
There let me see thee sink into a mood
Of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye
Be calm as water when the winds are gone,
And no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend!

We too have known such happy hours together,
That, were power granted to replace them (fetched
From out the pensive shadows where they lie)
In the first warmth of their original sunshine,
Loth should I be to use it: passing sweet
Are the domains of tender memory!

1817

XXVII.

SEPTEMBER, 1819.

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields
Are hung as if with golden shields
Bright trophies of the sun!
Like a fair sister of the sky,
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,
The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,
Albeit uninspired by love,
By love untaught to ring,
May well afford to mortal ear
An impulse more profoundly dear
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat
In nature's struggling frame,

Some region of impatient life:
And jealousy, and quivering strife,
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy; — while I hear
These vespers of another year,
This hymn of thanks and praise,
My spirit seems to mount above
The anxieties of human love,
And earth's precarious days.

But list! — though winter storms be nigh,
Unchecked is that soft harmony:
There lives Who can provide
For all his creatures; and in Him,
Even like the radiant Seraphim,
These choristers confide.

XXVIII.

UPON THE SAME OCCASION.

Departing Summer hath assumed
An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of Spring,
That calls from yonder leafy shade,
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,
Such tribute as to Winter chill
The lonely redbreast pays!
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
From social warblers gathering in
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,
And yellow on the bough: —
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head!
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed
Around a younger brow!

Yet will I temperately rejoice;
Wide is the range, and free the choice
Of undiscordant themes;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize
Not less than vernal ecstasies,
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demigods are strong
On whom the Muses smile;
But some their function have disclaimed,
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains

In Britain's earliest dawn:
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,
While all too daringly the veil
Of nature was withdrawn!

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the hive chords Alcæus smote,
Inflamed by sense of wrong;
Woe! woe to Tyrants! from the lyre
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce, vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page
By wingèd Love inscribed, to assuage
The pangs of vain pursuit;
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid
With finest touch of passion swayed
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore
The wreck of Herculanean lore,
What rapture! could ye seize
Some Theban fragment, or unroll
One precious, tender-hearted scroll
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
Of poesy; a bursting forth
Of genius from the dust:
What Horace gloried to behold,

What Maro loved, shall we enfold?
Can haughty Time be just!

1818.

XXIX.

MEMORY.

A PEN — to register; a key —
That winds through secret wards;
Are well assigned to Memory
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
A Pencil to her hand;
That, softening objects, sometimes even
Outstrips the heart's demand;

That smooths foregone distress, the lines
Of lingering care subdues,
Long-vanished happiness refines,
And clothes in brighter hues;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
Those Spectres to dilate
That startle Conscience, as she lurks
Within her lonely seat.

O that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,

That not an image of the past
Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook
Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep
In frosty moonlight glistening;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

1828.

XXX.

This Lawn, a carpet all alive
With shadows flung from leaves, to strive
In dance, amid a press
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields
Of strenuous idleness;

Less quick the stir when tide and breeze
Encounter, and to narrow seas
Forbid a moment's rest;
The medley less when Boreal Lights
Glance to and fro, like aery Sprites
To feats of arms addrest!

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,
This ceaseless play, the genuine life
That serves the steadfast hours
Is in the grass beneath, that grows
Unheeded, and the mute repose
Of sweetly-breathing flowers.

1829.

XXXI.

HUMANITY.

[The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning of the following verses, are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.]

What though the Accused, upon his own appeal
To righteous Gods when man has ceased to feel,
Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,
Before the Stone of Power no longer stand,
To take his sentence from the balanced Block,
As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock;
Though, in the depths of sunless groves, no more
The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore;
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering trees
Do still perform mysterious offices!
And functions dwell in beast and bird that sway

The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play,
Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes
To watch for undelusive auguries ;—
Not uninspired appear their simplest ways ;
Their voices mount symbolical of praise,
To mix with hymns that Spirits make and hear
And to fallen man their innocence is dear.
Enraptured Art draws from those sacred springs
Streams that reflect the poetry of things !
Where Christian Martyrs stand in hues portrayed,
That, might a wish avail, would never fade,
Borne in their hands the lily and the palm
Shed round the altar a celestial calm ;
There, too, behold the lamb and guileless dove
Pressed in the tenderness of virgin love
To saintly bosoms ! — Glorious is the blending
Of right affections climbing or descending
Along a scale of light and life, with cares
Alternate ; carrying holy thoughts and prayers
Up to the sovereign seat of the Most High ;
Descending to the worm in charity ;
Like those good Angels whom a dream of night
Gave, in the field of Luz, to Jacob's sight,
All, while *he* slept, treading the pendent stairs
Earthward or heavenward, radiant messengers,
That, with a perfect will in one accord
Of strict obedience, serve the Almighty Lord ;
And with untired humility forbore
To speed their errand by the wings they wore.

What a fair world were ours for verse to paint,
If Power could live at ease with self-restraint!
Opinion bow before the naked sense
Of the great Vision, — faith in Providence;
Merciful over all his creatures, just
To the least particle of sentient dust;
But, fixing by immutable decrees,
Seed-time and harvest for his purposes!
Then would be closed the restless oblique eye
That looks for evil like a treacherous spy;
Disputes would then relax, like stormy winds
That into breezes sink; impetuous minds
By discipline endeavor to grow meek
As Truth herself, whom they profess to seek.
Then Genius, shunning fellowship with Pride,
Would braid his golden locks at Wisdom's side;
Love ebb and flow untroubled by caprice;
And not alone *harsh* tyranny would cease,
But unoffending creatures find release
From qualified oppression, whose defence
Rests on a hollow plea of recompense;
Thought-tempered wrongs, for each humane respect
Oft worse to bear, or deadlier in effect.
Witness those glances of indignant scorn
From some high-minded Slave, impelled to spurn
The kindness that would make him less forlorn;
Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,
His look of pitiable gratitude!

Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,
Whose day departs in pomp, returns with smiles,

To greet the flowers and fruitage of a land,
As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes fanned
A land whose azure mountain-tops are seats
For Gods in council, whose green vales, retreats
Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling there
To breathe Elysian peace in upper air.

Though cold as winter, gloomy as the grave,
Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not a slave.
Shall man assume a property in man?
Lay on the moral will a withering ban?
Shame that our laws at distance still protect
Enormities, which they at home reject!
"Slaves cannot breathe in England," — yet that boast
Is but a mockery! when from coast to coast,
Though *fettered* slave be none, her floors and soil
Groan underneath a weight of slavish toil,
For the poor Many, measured out by rules
Fetched with cupidity from heartless schools,
That to an Idol, falsely called "the Wealth
Of Nations," sacrifice a People's health,
Body and mind and soul; a thirst so keen
Is ever urging on the vast machine
Of sleepless Labor, 'mid whose dizzy wheels
The Power least prized is that which thinks and feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate age
And all the heavy or light vassalage
Which for their sakes we fasten, as may suit

Our varying moods, on human kind or brute,
'T were well in little, as in great, to pause,
Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws.
Not from his fellows only man may learn
Rights to compare and duties to discern!
All creatures and all objects, in degree,
Are friends and patrons of humanity.
There are to whom the garden, grove, and field
Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield;
Who would not lightly violate the grace
The lowliest flower possesses in its place;
Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,
Which nothing less than Infinite Power could give.

1829.

XXXII.

The unremitting voice of nightly streams,
That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful powers,
If neither soothing to the worm that gleams
Through dewy grass, nor small birds hushed in bowers,
Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy flowers, —
That voice of unpretending harmony
(For who what is shall measure by what seems
To be, or not to be,
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)
Wants not a healing influence that can creep
Into the human breast, and mix with sleep

To regulate the motion of our dreams
For kindly issues, — as through every clime
Was felt near murmuring brooks in earliest time
As at this day, the rudest swains who dwell
Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling knell
Of water-breaks, with grateful heart could tell.

1840.

XXXIII.

THOUGHTS ON THE SEASONS.

Flattered with promise of escape
From every hurtful blast,
Spring takes, O sprightly May! thy shape
Her loveliest and her last.

Less fair is Summer riding high
In fierce solstitial power,
Less fair than when a lenient sky
Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves
The labors of the plough,
And ripening fruits and forest leaves
All brighten on the bough, —

What pensive beauty Autumn shows,
Before she hears the sound

Of Winter rushing in, to close
The emblematic round!

Such be our Spring, our Summer such;
So may our Autumn blend
With hoary Winter, and Life touch,
Through heaven-born hope, her end:

1829.

XXXIV.

TO ——.

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN CHILD, MARCH, 1833.

"Tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis
Navita, nudus humi jacet," &c. — LUCRETIUS.

LIKE a shipwrecked Sailor tost
By rough waves on a perilous coast,
Lies the Babe, in helplessness
And in tenderest nakedness,
Flung by laboring Nature forth
Upon the mercies of the earth.
Can its eyes beseech? — no more
Than the hands are free to implore:
Voice but serves for one brief cry;
Plaint was it? or prophecy
Of sorrow that will surely come?
Omen of man's grievous doom!

But, O Mother! by the close
Duly granted to thy throes;
By the silent thanks, now tending
Incense-like to Heaven, descending
Now to mingle and to move
With the gush of earthly love,
As a debt to that frail Creature,
Instrument of struggling Nature
For the blissful calm, the peace
Known but to this *one* release,—
Can the pitying spirit doubt
That for human kind springs out
From the penalty a sense
Of more than mortal recompense?

As a floating summer cloud,
Though of gorgeous drapery proud,
To the sun-burnt traveller,
Or the stooping laborer,
Ofttimes makes its bounty known
By its shadow round him thrown;
So, by checkerings of sad cheer,
Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,
Of their presence tell,—too bright,
Haply, for corporeal sight!
Ministers of grace divine
Feelingly their brows incline
O er this seeming Castaway,
Breathing, in the light of day,
Something like the faintest breath

That has power to baffle death,—
Beautiful, while very weakness
Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother! under warrant
Of the Universal Parent,
Who repays in season due
Them who have, like thee, been true
To the filial chain let down
From his everlasting throne,
Angels, hovering round thy couch,
With their softest whispers vouch,
That — whatever griefs may fret.
Cares entangle, sins beset,
This thy First-born, and with tears
Stain her cheek in future years —
Heavenly succor, not denied
To the babe, whate'er betide,
Will to the woman be supplied.

Mother! blest be thy calm ease;
Blest the starry promises, —
And the firmament benign,
Hallowed be it, where they shine.
Yes, for them whose souls have scope
Ample for a wingèd hope,
And can earthward bend an ear
For needful listening, pledge is nere,
That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread
In thy footsteps, and be led

By that other Guide, whose light
Of manly virtues, mildly bright,
Gave him first the wished-for part
In thy gentle, virgin heart;
Then, amid the storms of life
Presignified by that dread strife
Whence ye have escaped together,
She may look for serene weather;
In all trials sure to find
Comfort for a faithful mind;
Kindlier issues, holier rest,
Than even now await her, prest,
Conscious Nursling, to thy breast!

XXXV.

THE WARNING.

A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING.

List, the winds of March are blowing;
Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of showing
Their meek heads to the nipping air,
Which ye feel not, happy pair!
Sunk into a kindly sleep.
We, meanwhile, our hope will keep;
And if Time leagued with adverse Change
(Too busy fear!) shall cross its range,
Whatsoever check they bring,

Anxious duty hindering,
To like hope our prayers will cling.

Thus, while the ruminating spirit feeds
Upon the events of home as life proceeds,
Affections pure and holy in their source
Gain a fresh impulse, run a livelier course;
Hopes that within the Father's heart prevail,
Are in the experienced Grandsire's slow to fail;
And if the harp pleased his gay youth, it rings
To his grave touch with no unready strings.
While thoughts press on, and feelings overflow,
And quick words round him fall, like flakes of snow.

Thanks to the Powers that yet maintain their sway,
And have renewed the tributary Lay.
Truths of the heart flock in with eager pace,
And FANCY greets them with a fond embrace;
Swift as the rising sun his beams extends,
She shoots the tidings forth to distant friends;
Their gifts she hails (deemed precious, as they prove
For the unconscious Babe so prompt a love)! —
But from this peaceful centre of delight
Vague sympathies have urged her to take flight:
Rapt into upper regions, like the bee
That sucks from mountain heath her honey fee,
Or like the warbling lark, intent to shroud
His head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,
She soars, — and here and there her pinions rest

On proud towers, like this humble cottage, blest
With a new visitant, an infant guest, —
Towers where red streamers flout the breezy sky
In pomp foreseen by her creative eye,
When feasts shall crowd the hall, and steeple-bells
Glad proclamation make, and heights and dells
Catch the blithe music as it sinks and swells,
And harbored ships, whose pride is on the sea,
Shall hoist their topmost flags in sign of glee,
Honoring the hope of noble ancestry.

But who (though neither reckoning ills assigned
By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind
The track that was, and is, and must be, worn
With weary feet by all of woman born)
Shall *now* by such a gift with joy be moved,
Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved?
Not He, whose last faint memory will command
The truth that Britain was his native land;
Whose infant soul was tutored to confide
In the cleansed faith for which her martyrs died;
Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown
With rapture thrilled; whose Youth revered the crown
Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,
Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor!
Not He, who from her mellowed practice drew
His social sense of just, and fair, and true;
And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France
Rash Polity begin her maniac dance,

Foundations broken up, the deeps run wild,
Nor grieved to see (himself not unbeguiled), —
Woke from the dream, the dreamer to upbraid,
And learn how sanguine expectations fade
When novel trusts by folly are betrayed, —
To see Presumption, turning pale, refrain
From further havoc, but repent in vain, —
Good aims lie down, and perish in the road
Where guilt had urged them on with ceaseless goad,
Proofs thickening round her that on public ends
Domestic virtue vitally depends,
That civic strife can turn the happiest hearth
Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting earth.

Can such a one, dear Babe! though glad and proud
To welcome thee, repel the fears that crowd
Into his English breast, and spare to quake
Less for his own than for thy innocent sake?
Too late — or, should the providence of God
Lead, through dark ways by sin and sorrow trod,
Justice and peace to a secure abode,
Too soon — thou com'st into this breathing world·
Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled.
Who shall preserve or prop the tottering Realm?
What hand suffice to govern the state-helm?
If, in the aims of men, the surest test
Of good or bad (what'er be sought for or profest)
Lie in the means required, or ways ordained,
For compassing the end, else never gained,

Yet governors and governed both are blind
To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind;
If to expedience principle must bow,
Past, future, shrinking up beneath the incumbent
Now;
If cowardly concession still must feed
The thirst for power in men who ne'er concede,
Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way
For domination at some riper day;
If generous Loyalty must stand in awe
Of subtle Treason in his mask of law,
Or with bravado insolent and hard
Provoking punishment to win reward;
If office help the factious to conspire,
And they who *should* extinguish fan the fire, —
Then will the sceptre be a straw, the crown
Sit loosely, like the thistle's crest of down,
To be blown off at will, by Power that spares it
In cunning patience, from the head that wears it.

Lost people, trained to theoretic feud!
Lost above all, ye laboring multitude!
Bewildered, whether ye, by slanderous tongues
Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs,
And over fancied usurpations brood,
Oft snapping at revenge in sullen mood;
Or, from long stress of real injuries, fly
To desperation for a remedy,
In bursts of outrage spread your judgments wide
And to your wrath cry out, "Be thou our guide"

Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread earth's floor
In marshalled thousands, darkening street and moor
With the worst shape mock-patience ever wore?
Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem
By Flatterers carried, mount into a dream
Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage behest
Justice shall rule, disorder be suppressed,
And every man sit down as Plenty's Guest:
— O for a bridle bitted with remorse
To stop your Leaders in their headstrong course!
O may the Almighty scatter with his grace
These mists, and lead you to a safer place,
By paths no human wisdom can foretrace!
May He pour round you, from worlds far above
Man's feverish passions, his pure light of love,
That quietly restores the natural mien
To hope, and makes truth willing to be seen!
Else shall your blood-stained hands in frenzy reap
Fields gayly sown when promises were cheap. —
Why is the Past belied with wicked art,
The Future made to play so false a part,
Among a people famed for strength of mind,
Foremost in freedom, noblest of mankind?
We act as if we joyed in the sad tune
Storms make in rising, valued in the moon
Nought but her changes. Thus, ungrateful Nation!
If thou persist, and, scorning moderation,
Spread for thyself the snares of tribulation,
Whom, then, shall meekness guard? What saving
skill

Lie in forbearance, strength in standing still?
— Soon shall the widow, (for the speed of Time
Naught equals when the hours are winged with crime,)
Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous knee
From him who judged her lord, a like decree;
The skies will weep o'er old men desolate:
Ye little-ones! Earth shudders at your fate,
Outcasts and homeless orphans ——

But turn, my Soul, and from the sleeping pair
Learn thou the beauty of omniscient care!
Be strong in faith, bid anxious thoughts lie still;
Seek for the good and cherish it, — the ill
Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.

1833.

XXXVI.

If this great world of joy and pain
Revolve in one sure track;
If freedom, set, will rise again,
And virtue, flown, come back;
Woe to the purblind crew who fill
The heart with each day's care;
Nor gain, from past or future, skill
To bear, and to forbear!

1833.

XXXVII.

THE LABORER'S NOONDAY HYMN.

Up to the throne of God is borne
The voice of praise at early morn,
And he accepts the punctual hymn
Sung as the light of day grows dim.

Nor will he turn his ear aside
From holy offerings at noontide:
Then, here reposing, let us raise
A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burden be not light,
We need not toil from morn to night;
The respite of the midday hour
Is in the thankful Creature's power.

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,
That, drawn from this one hour of rest,
Are with a ready heart bestowed
Upon the service of our God!

Each field is then a hallowed spot,
An altar is in each man's cot,
A church in every grove that spreads
Its living roof above our heads.

Look up to Heaven! the industrious Sun
Already half his race hath run;
He cannot halt nor go astray,
But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord! since his rising in the east,
If we have faltered or transgressed,
Guide, from thy love's abundant source,
What yet remains of this day's course:

Help with thy grace, through life's short day
Our upward and our downward way;
And glorify for us the west,
When we shall sink to final rest.

1834.

XXXVIII.

ODE,

COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING.

While from the purpling east departs
The star that led the dawn,
Blithe Flora from her couch upstarts,
For May is on the lawn.
A quickening hope, a freshening glee,
Forcran the expected Power,
Whose first-drawn breath from bush and tree
Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes her whose sway
  Tempers the year's extremes;
Who scattereth lustres o'er noonday
  Like morning's dewy gleams;
While mellow warble, sprightly trill,
  The tremulous heart excite,
And hums the balmy air to still
  The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power! when youths and maids
  At peep of dawn would rise,
And wander forth, in forest glades
  Thy birth to solemnize.
Though mute the song, to grace the rite,
  Untouched the hawthorn bough,
Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight;
  Man changes, but not Thou!

Thy feathered lieges bill and wings
  In love's disport employ;
Warmed by thy influence, creeping things
  Awake to silent joy;
Queen art thou still for each gay plant
  Where the slim wild deer roves,
And served in depths where fishes haunt
  Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,
  Instinctive homage pay;

Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath
To honor thee, sweet May!
Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs
Behold a smokeless sky,
Their puniest flower-pot nursling dares
To open a bright eye.

And if, on this thy natal morn,
The pole, from which thy name
Hath not departed, stands forlorn
Of song and dance and game;
Still from the village-green a vow
Aspires to thee addrest,
Wherever peace is on the brow,
Or love within the breast.

Yes! where Love nestles thou canst teach
The soul to love the more;
Hearts also shall thy lessons reach
That never loved before.
Stripped is the haughty one of pride,
The bashful freed from fear,
While rising, like the ocean-tide,
In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre! weak words refuse
The service to prolong!
To yon exulting thrush the Muse
Intrusts the imperfect song:

His voice shall chant, in accents clear,
Throughout the livelong day,
Till the first silver star appear,
The sovereignty of May.

1824.

XXXIX.

TO MAY.

THOUGH many suns have risen and set
Since thou, blithe May, wert born,
And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget
Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn;
There are who to a birthday strain
Confine not harp and voice,
But evermore throughout thy reign
Are grateful and rejoice!

Delicious odors! music sweet,
Too sweet to pass away!
O for a deathless song to meet
The soul's desire, — a lay
That, when a thousand years are told,
Should praise thee, genial Power!
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,
And winter's dreariest hour!

Earth, sea, thy presence feel, — nor less,
If yon ethereal blue

With its soft smile the truth express,
The heavens have felt it too.
The inmost heart of man, if glad,
Partakes a livelier cheer,
And eyes that cannot but be sad
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks
Of hope that grew by stealth,
How many wan and faded cheeks
Have kindled into health!
The Old, by thee revived, have said,
"Another year is ours";
And way-worn Wanderers, poorly fed,
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lisps a merry song
Amid his playful peers?
The tender Infant, who was long
A prisoner of fond fears;
But now, when every sharp-edged blast
Is quiet in its sheath,
His Mother leaves him free to taste
Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

Thy help is with the weed that creeps
Along the humblest ground;
No cliff so bare but on its steeps
Thy favors may be found:

But most on some peculiar nook
That our own hands have drest,
Thou and thy train are proud to look,
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth
When May is whispering, "Come!
Choose from the bowers of virgin earth
The happiest for your home;
Heaven's bounteous love through me is spread,
From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,
Drops on the mouldering turret's head,
And on your turf-clad graves!"

Such greeting heard, away with sighs
For lilies that must fade,
Or "the rathe primrose as it dies
Forsaken" in the shade!
Vernal fruitions and desires
Are linked in endless chase;
While, as one kindly growth retires,
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known
Mishap by worm and blight;
If expectations newly blown
Have perished in thy sight;
If loves and joys, while up they sprung,
Were caught as in a snare?

Such is the lot of all the young
However bright and fair.

Lo! Streams that April could not check
Are patient of thy rule;
Gurgling in foamy water-break,
Loitering in glassy pool:
By thee, thee only, could be sent
Such gentle mists as glide,
Curling with unconfirmed intent,
On that green mountain's side.

How delicate the leafy veil
Through which yon house of God
Gleams 'mid the peace of this deep dale,
By few but shepherds trod!
And lowly huts near beaten ways
No sooner stand attired
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise
Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,
Permit not for one hour,
A blossom from thy crown to drop,
Nor add to it a flower!
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch
Of self-restraining art,
This modest charm of not too much,
Part seen, imagined part!

1826 - 1834

XL.

LINES

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE PENCIL OF F. STONE.

BEGUILED into forgetfulness of care
Due to the day's unfinished task; of pen
Or book regardless, and of that fair scene
In Nature's prodigality displayed
Before my window, oftentimes and long
I gaze upon a Portrait whose mild gleam
Of beauty never ceases to enrich
The common light; whose stillness charms the air,
Or seems to charm it, into like repose;
Whose silence, for the pleasure of the ear,
Surpasses sweetest music. There she sits,
With emblematic purity attired
In a white vest, white as her marble neck
Is, and the pillar of the throat would be
But for the shadow by the drooping chin
Cast into that recess, — the tender shade,
The shade and light, both there and everywhere,
And through the very atmosphere she breathes,
Broad, clear, and toned harmoniously, with skill
That might from nature have been learnt in the hour
When the lone shepherd sees the morning spread
Upon the mountains. Look at her, whoe'er
Thou be, that, kindling with a poet's soul,
Hast loved the painter's true Promethean craft

Intensely, — from Imagination take
The treasure, — what mine eyes behold see thou,
Even though the Atlantic Ocean roll between.

A silver line, that runs from brow to crown
And in the middle parts the braided hair,
Just serves to show how delicate a soil
The golden harvest grows in; and those eyes,
Soft and capacious as a cloudless sky
Whose azure depth their color emulates,
Must needs be conversant with upward looks,
Prayer's voiceless service; but now, seeking naught
And shunning naught, their own peculiar life
Of motion they renounce, and with the head
Partake its inclination towards earth
In humble grace, and quiet pensiveness
Caught at the point where it stops short of sadness.

Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make me
Thy confidant! say, whence derived that air
Of calm abstraction? Can the ruling thought
Be with some lover far away, or one
Crossed by misfortune, or of doubted faith?
Inapt conjecture! Childhood here, a moon
Crescent in simple loveliness serene,
Has but approached the gates of womanhood.
Not entered them; her heart is yet unpierced
By the blind Archer-god; her fancy free:
The fount of feeling, if unsought elsewhere,
Will not be found.

Her right hand, as it lies
Across the slender wrist of the left arm
Upon her lap reposing, holds — but mark
How slackly, for the absent mind permits
No firmer grasp — a little wild-flower, joined.
As in a posy, with a few pale ears
Of yellowing corn, the same that overtopped
And in their common birthplace sheltered it
Till they were plucked together ; a blue flower
Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed ;
But Ceres, in her garland, might have worn
That ornament, unblamed. The floweret, held
In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she knows,
(Her Father told her so,) in youth's gay dawn
Her Mother's favorite ; and the orphan Girl,
In her own dawn, a dawn less gay and bright,
Loves it, while there in solitary peace
She sits, for that departed Mother's sake.
— Not from a source less sacred is derived
(Surely I do not err) that pensive air
Of calm abstraction through the face diffused
And the whole person.
Words have something told
More than the pencil can, and verily
More than is needed, but the precious Art
Forgives their interference, — Art divine,
That both creates and fixes, in despite
Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath wrought.

Strange contrasts have we in this world of ours!
That posture, and the look of filial love

Thinking of past and gone, with what is left
Dearly united, might be swept away
From this fair Portrait's fleshy Archetype,
Even by an innocent fancy's slightest freak
Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored
To their lost place, or meet in harmony
So exquisite; but *here* do they abide,
Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art
Godlike, a humble branch of the divine,
In visible quest of immortality,
Stretched forth with trembling hope? — In every realm,
From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains,
Thousands, in each variety of tongue
That Europe knows, would echo this appeal
One above all, a Monk who waits on God
In the magnific Convent built of yore
To sanctify the Escurial palace. He —
Guiding, from cell to cell and room to room,
A British Painter (eminent for truth
In character, and depth of feeling, shown
By labors that have touched the hearts of kings,
And are endeared to simple cottagers) —
Came, in that service, to a glorious work,
Our Lord's Last Supper, beautiful as when first
The appropriate Picture, fresh from Titian's hand,
Graced the Refectory: and there, while both
Stood with eyes fixed upon that masterpiece,
The hoary Father in the Stranger's ear
Breathed out these words: — "Here daily do we sit,

Thanks given to God for daily bread, and here,
Pondering the mischiefs of these restless times,
And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dispersed,
Or changed and changing, I not seldom gaze
Upon this solemn Company, unmoved
By shock of circumstance, or lapse of years,
Until I cannot but believe that they —
They are in truth the Substance, we the Shadows."

So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs
Melting away within him like a dream
Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to speak:
And I, grown old, but in a happier land,
Domestic Portrait! have to verse consigned
In thy calm presence those heart-moving words:
Words that can soothe, more than they agitate;
Whose spirit, like the angel that went down
Into Bethesda's pool, with healing virtue
Informs the fountain in the human breast
Which by the visitation was disturbed.
—— But why this stealing tear? Companion mute,
On thee I look, not sorrowing; fare thee well,
My Song's Inspirer, once again farewell! *

1834.

* The pile of buildings, composing the palace and convent of San Lorenzo, has, in common usage, lost its proper name in that of the *Escurial*, a village at the foot of the hill upon which the splendid edifice, built by Philip the Second, stands. It need scarcely be added that Wilkie is the painter alluded to.

XLI.

THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED

Among a grave fraternity of Monks,
For One, but surely not for One alone,
Triumphs, in that great work, the Painter's skill,
Humbling the body, to exalt the soul;
Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong
And dissolution and decay, the warm
And breathing life of flesh, as if already
Clothed with impassive majesty, and graced
With no mean earnest of a heritage
Assigned to it in future worlds. Thou, too,
With thy memorial flower, meek Portraiture!
From whose serene companionship I passed,
Pursued by thoughts that haunt me still; thou also —
Though but a simple object, into light
Called forth by those affections that endear
The private hearth; though keeping thy sole seat
In singleness, and little tried by time,
Creation, as it were, of yesterday —
With a congenial function art endued
For each and all of us, together joined
In course of nature under a low roof
By charities and duties that proceed
Out of the bosom of a wiser vow.
To a like salutary sense of awe

Or sacred wonder, growing with the power
Of meditation that attempts to weigh,
In faithful scales, things and their opposites,
Can thy enduring quiet gently raise
A household small and sensitive, — whose love,
Dependent as in part its blessings are
Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved
On earth, will be revived, we trust, in heaven.*

1834.

XLII.

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
Would that the little Flowers were born to live,
Conscious of half the pleasure which they give;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were known
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown
On the smooth surface of this naked stone!

* In the class entitled "Musings," in Mr. Southey's Minor Poems, is one upon his own miniature picture, taken in childhood, and another upon a landscape painted by Gaspar Poussin. It is possible that every word of the above verses, though similar in subject, might have been written had the author been unacquainted with those beautiful effusions of poetic sentiment. But, for his own satisfaction, he must be allowed thus publicly to acknowledge the pleasure those two Poems of his Friend have given him, and the grateful influence they have upon his mind as often as he reads them, or thinks of them.

And what if hence a bold desire should mount
High as the Sun, that he could take account
Of all that issues from his glorious fount!

So might he ken how by his sovereign aid
These delicate companionships are made;
And how he rules the pomp of light and shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines by night
So privileged, what a countenance of delight
Would through the clouds break forth on human
sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn thine eye,
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,
Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,
Be thou to love and praise alike impelled,
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

XLIII.

UPON SEEING A COLORED DRAWING OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE IN AN ALBUM.

Who rashly strove thy Image to portray?
Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air;

How could he think of the live creature, — gay
With a divinity of colors, drest
In all her brightness, from the dancing crest
Far as the last gleam of the filmy train
Extended and extending to sustain
The motions that it graces, — and forbear
To drop his pencil! Flowers of every clime
Depicted on these pages smile at time;
And gorgeous insects copied with nice care
Are here, and likenesses of many a shell
Tost ashore by restless waves,
Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from caves
Where sea-nymphs might be proud to dwell:
But whose rash hand (again I ask) could dare,
'Mid casual tokens and promiscuous shows,
To circumscribe this Shape in fixed repose;
Could imitate for indolent survey,
Perhaps for touch profane,
Plumes that might catch, but cannot keep, a stain;
And, with cloud-streaks lightest and loftiest, share
The sun's first greeting, his last farewell ray!

Resplendent Wanderer! followed with glad eyes
Where'er her course; mysterious Bird!
To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,
Eastern Islanders have given
A holy name, the Bird of Heaven!
And even a title higher still,
The Bird of God! whose blessed will
She seems performing as she flies

Over the earth and through the skies
In never-wearied search of Paradise, —
Region that crowns her beauty with the name
She bears for *us*, — for us how blest,
How happy at all seasons, could like aim
Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight
On wings that fear no glance of God's pure sight,
No tempest from his breath, their promised rest
Seeking with indefatigable quest
Above a world that deems itself most wise
When most enslaved by gross realities!

1835.

SONNETS

DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER.

I.

COMPOSED AFTER READING A NEWSPAPER OF THE DAY.

"PEOPLE! your chains are severing link by link;
Soon shall the Rich be levelled down, — the Poor
Meet them half-way." Vain boast! for these, the more
They thus would rise, must low and lower sink,
Till, by repentance stung, they fear to think;
While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant few,
Bent in quick turns each other to undo,
And mix the poison they themselves must drink.
Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to cry,
"Knowledge will save me from the threatened woe."
For, if than other rash ones more thou know,
Yet on presumptuous wing as far would fly
Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,
Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty.

II.

UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST.

MARCH, 1832.

RELUCTANT call it was; the rite delayed;
And in the Senate some there were who doffed
The last of their humanity, and scoffed
At providential judgments, undismayed
By their own daring. But the People prayed
As with one voice; their flinty heart grew soft
With penitential sorrow, and aloft
Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us aid!"
O that with aspirations more intense,
Chastised by self-abasement more profound,
This People, once so happy, so renowned
For liberty, would seek from God defence
Against far heavier ill, the pestilence
Of revolution, impiously unbound!

III.

SAID Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud,
Falsehood and Treachery, in close council met,
Deep under ground, in Pluto's cabinet,
"The frost of England's pride will soon be thawed
Hooded the open brow that overawed
Our schemes · the faith and honor, never yet
By us with hope encountered, be upset;—
For once I burst my bands, and cry, applaud!"
Then whispered she, "The Bill is carrying out!

They heard, and, starting up, the Brood of Night
Clapped hands, and shook with glee their matted
locks;
All Powers and Places that abhor the light
Joined in the transport, echoed back their shout,
Hurrah for ———, hugging his Ballot-box!

IV.

Blest Statesman he, whose Mind's unselfish will
Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts: whose
eye
Sees that, apart from magnanimity,
Wisdom exists not; nor the humbler skill
Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill
With patient care. What though assaults run high,
They daunt not him who holds his ministry,
Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil
Its duties; — prompt to move but firm to wait, —
Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely found;
That, for the functions of an ancient State, —
Strong by her charters, free because imbound,
Servant of Providence, not slave of Fate, —
Perilous is sweeping change, all chance unsound.

V.

☞ ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT HISTORIES AND NOTICES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

Portentous change, when History can appear
As the cool advocate of foul device;

Reckless audacity extol, and jeer
At consciences perplexed with scruples nice!
They who bewail not, must abhor, the sneer
Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;
Or haply sprung from vaunting Cowardice
Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.
Hath it not long been said the wrath of Man
Works not the righteousness of God? O bend,
Bend, ye Perverse! to judgments from on High,
Laws that lay under Heaven's perpetual ban
All principles of action that transcend
The sacred limits of humanity.

VI.

CONTINUED.

Who ponders National events shall find
An awful balancing of loss and gain,
Joy based on sorrow, good with all combined,
And proud deliverence issuing out of pain
And direful throes; as if the All-ruling Mind,
With whose perfection it consists to ordain
Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurricane,
Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind
By laws immutable. But woe for him
Who, thus deceived, shall lend an eager hand
To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,
And Truth, whose eye guilt only can make dim
And Will, whose office, by Divine command,
Is to control and check disordered Powers?

VII.

CONCLUDED.

LONG-FAVORED England! be not thou misled
By monstrous theories of alien growth,
Lest alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth,
Self-smitten till thy garments reek dyed red
With thy own blood, which tears in torrents shed
Fail to wash out, tears flowing ere thy troth
Be plighted, not to ease, but sullen sloth,
Or wan despair, — the ghost of false hope fled
Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,
My Country! if such warning be held dear,
Then shall a veteran's heart be thrilled with joy,
One who would gather from eternal truth,
For time and season, rules that work to cheer,
Not scourge, — to save the People, not destroy.

VIII.

MEN of the Western World! in Fate's dark book
Whence these opprobrious leaves of dire portent.
Think ye your British Ancestors forsook
Their native Land, for outrage provident;
From unsubmissive necks the bridle shook,
To give, in their Descendants, freer vent
And wider range to passions turbulent,
To mutual tyranny a deadlier look?
Nay, said a voice, soft as the south-wind's breath,
Dive through the stormy surface of the flood

To the great current flowing underneath;
Explore the countless springs of silent good;
So shall the truth be better understood,
And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong in faith.

IX.

TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS.

Days undefiled by luxury or sloth,
Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,
Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness obeyed,
Words that require no sanction from an oath,
And simple honesty a common growth, —
This high repute, with bounteous Nature's aid,
Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed
At will, your power the measure of your troth! —
All who revere the memory of Penn
Grieve for the land on whose wild woods his name
Was fondly grafted with a virtuous aim,
Renounced, abandoned, by degenerate Men,
For state-dishonor black as ever came
To upper air from Mammon's loathsome den.

X.

AT BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE INSURRECTIONS, 1837.

I.

Ah, why deceive ourselves! by no mere fit
Of sudden passion roused shall men attain

True freedom where for ages they have lain
Bound in a dark, abominable pit,
With life's best sinews more and more unknit.
Here, there, a banded few who loathe the chain
May rise to break it: effort worse than vain
For thee, O great Italian nation, split
Into those jarring fractions. — Let thy scope
Be one fixed mind for all; thy rights approve
To thy own conscience gradually renewed;
Learn to make Time the father of wise Hope;
Then trust thy cause to the arm of Fortitude,
The light of Knowledge, and the warmth of Love.

XI.

CONTINUED.

II.

HARD task! exclaim the undisciplined, to lean
On Patience, coupled with such slow endeavor,
That long-lived servitude must last for ever.
Perish the grovelling few, who, pressed between
Wrongs and the terror of redress, would wean
Millions from glorious aims. Our chains to sever
Let us break forth in tempests now or never! —
What, is there then no space for golden mean
And gradual progress? — Twilight leads to day,
And, even within the burning zones of earth,
The hastiest sunrise yields a temperate ray;
The softest breeze to fairest flowers gives birth

Think not that Prudence dwells in dark abodes,
She scans the future with the eye of gods.

XII.

CONCLUDED.

III.

As leaves are to the tree whereon they grow
And wither, every human generation
Is to the Being of a mighty nation,
Locked in our world's embrace through weal and woe;
Thought that should teach the zealot to forego
Rash schemes, to abjure all selfish agitation,
And seek through noiseless pains and moderation
The unblemished good they only can bestow.
Alas! with most, who weigh futurity
Against time present, passion holds the scales:
Hence equal ignorance of both prevails,
And nations sink; or, struggling to be free,
Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded whales
Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

XIII.

Young England, — what is then become of Old,
Of dear Old England? Think they she is dead,
Dead to the very name? Presumption fed
On empty air! That name will keep its hold

In the true filial bosom's inmost fold
For ever. — The Spirit of Alfred, at the head
Of all who for her rights watched, toiled, and bled,
Knows that this prophecy is not too bold.
What! how! shall she submit in will and deed
To Beardless Boys. — an imitative race,
The *servum pecus* of a Gallic breed?
Dear Mother! if thou *must* thy steps retrace,
Go where at least meek Innocency dwells;
Let Babes and Sucklings be thy oracles.

XIV.

Feel for the wrongs to universal ken
Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies;
And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren
Taught him concealment) hidden from all eyes
In silence and the awful modesties
Of sorrow; — feel for all, as brother Men!
Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw
By casual boons and formal charities;
Learn to be just, just through impartial law;
Far as ye may, erect and equalize;
And what ye cannot reach by statute, draw
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice!

SONNETS

UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

IN SERIES.

I.

SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCASTER CASTLE (ON THE ROAD FROM THE SOUTH).

THIS Spot — at once unfolding sight so fair
Of sea and land, with yon gray towers that still
Rise up as if to lord it over air —
Might soothe in human breasts the sense of ill,
Or charm it out of memory; yea, might fill
The heart with joy and gratitude to God
For all his bounties upon man bestowed:
Why bears it then the name of "Weeping Hill?"
Thousands, as toward yon old Lancastrian Towers
A prison's crown, along this way they past
For lingering durance or quick death with shame
From this bare eminence thereon have cast
Their first look, — blinded as tears fell in showers
Shed on their chains; and hence that doleful name

II.

Tenderly do we feel by Nature's law
For worst offenders: though the heart will heave
With indignation, deeply moved we grieve,
In after thought, for him who stood in awe
Neither of God nor man, and only saw,
Lost wretch, a horrible device enthroned
On proud temptations, till the victim groaned
Under the steel his hand had dared to draw.
But oh! restrain compassion, if its course
As oft befalls, prevent or turn aside
Judgments and aims and acts whose higher source
Is sympathy with the unforewarned, who died
Blameless, — with them that shuddered o'er his grave,
And all who from the law firm safety crave.

III.

The Roman Consul doomed his sons to die
Who had betrayed their country. The stern word
Afforded (may it through all time afford)
A theme for praise and admiration high.
Upon the surface of humanity
He rested not; its depth his mind explored;
He felt; but his parental bosom's lord
Was Duty, — Duty calmed his agony.
And some, we know when they by wilful act

A single human life have wrongly taken,
Pass sentence on themselves, confess the fact,
And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken
Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for faith
Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

IV.

Is *Death*, when evil against good has fought
With such fell mastery that a man may dare
By deeds the blackest purpose to lay bare, —
Is Death, for one to that condition brought,
For him, or any one, the thing that ought
To be *most* dreaded? Lawgivers, beware,
Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare
The murderer, ye, by sanction to that thought
Seemingly given, debase the general mind,
Tempt the vague will tried standards to disown,
Nor only palpable restraints unbind,
But upon Honor's head disturb the crown,
Whose absolute rule permits not to withstand
In the weak love of life his least command.

V.

Not to the object specially designed,
Howe'er momentous in itself it be,
Good to promote or curb depravity,
Is the wise Legislator's view confined.
His Spirit, when most severe, is oft most kind;

As all Authority in earth depends
On Love and Fear, their several powers he blends,
Copying with awe the one Paternal mind.
Uncaught by processes in show humane,
He feels how far the act would derogate
From even the humblest functions of the State,
If she, self-shorn of Majesty, ordain
That never more shall hang upon her breath
The last alternative of Life or Death.

VI.

Ye brood of conscience, Spectres! that frequent
The bad man's restless walk, and haunt his bed,—
Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent
In act, as hovering Angels when they spread
Their wings to guard the unconscious Innocent,—
Slow be the Statutes of the land to share
A laxity that could not but impair
Your power to punish crime, and so prevent.
And ye, Beliefs! coiled serpent-like about
The adage on all tongues, "Murder will out,"
How shall your ancient warnings work for good
In the full might they hitherto have shown,
If for deliberate shedder of man's blood
Survive not Judgment that requires his own?

VII.

Before the world had passed her time of youth,
While polity and discipline were weak,
The precept eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,
Came forth, — a light, though but as of daybreak,
Strong as could then be borne. A Master meek
Proscribed the spirit fostered by that rule,
Patience *his* law, long-suffering *his* school,
And love the end, which all through peace must
seek.
But lamentably do they err who strain
His mandates, given rash impulse to control
And keep vindictive thirstings from the soul,
So far that, if consistent in their scheme,
They must forbid the State to inflict a pain,
Making of social order a mere dream.

VIII.

Fit retribution, by the moral code
Determined, lies beyond the State's embrace;
Yet, as she may, for each peculiar case
She plants well-measured terrors in the road
Of wrongful acts. Downward it is and broad,
And, the main fear once doomed to banishment,
Far oftener then, bad ushering worse event,
Blood would be spilt that in his dark abode
Crime might lie better hid. And, should the change
Take from the horror due to a foul deed,

Pursuit and evidence so far must fail,
And, guilt escaping, passion then might plead
In angry spirits for her old, free range,
And the "wild justice of revenge" prevail.

IX.

Though to give timely warning and deter
Is one great aim of penalty, extend
Thy mental vision further, and ascend
Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.
What is a State? The wise behold in her
A creature born of time, that keeps one eye
Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,
To which her judgments reverently defer.
Speaking through Law's dispassionate voice, the State
Endues her conscience with external life
And being, to preclude or quell the strife
Of individual will, to elevate
The grovelling mind, the erring to recall,
And fortify the moral sense of all.

X.

Our bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine
Of an immortal spirit, is a gift
So sacred, so informed with light divine,
That no tribunal, though most wise to sift
Deed and intent, should turn the Being adrift

Into that world where penitential tear
May not avail, nor prayer have for God's ear
A voice, — that world whose veil no hand can lift
For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time,"
They urge, "have interwoven claims and rights
Not to be jeopardized through foulest crime:
The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-born lights."
Even so; but measuring not by finite sense
Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence.

XI.

Ah! think how one compelled for life to abide
Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the heart
Out of his own humanity, and part
With every hope that mutual cares provide;
And, should a less unnatural doom confide
In life-long exile on a savage coast,
Soon the relapsing penitent may boast
Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer pride.
Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and pure,
Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,
Leaving the final issue in *His* hands
Whose goodness knows no change, whose love is sure,
Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge amiss,
And wafts at will the contrite soul to bliss.

XII.

See the Condemned alone within his cell
And prostrate at some moment when remorse
Stings to the quick, and, with resistless force,
Assaults the pride she strove in vain to quell.
Then mark him, him who could so long rebel,
The crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent
Before the Altar, where the Sacrament
Softens his heart, till from his eyes outwell
Tears of salvation. Welcome death! while Heaven
Does in this change exceedingly rejoice;
While yet the solemn heed the State hath given
Helps him to meet the last Tribunal's voice
In faith, which fresh offices, were he cast
On old temptations, might for ever blast.

XIII.

CONCLUSION.

Yes, though He well may tremble at the sound
Of his own voice, who from the judgment-seat
Sends the pale Convict to his last retreat
In death; though Listeners shudder all around,
They know the dread requital's source profound:
Nor is, they feel, its wisdom obsolete —
(Would that it were!) — the sacrifice unmeet
For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs abound
The social rights of man breathe purer air;

Religion deepens her preventive care;
Then, moved by needless fear of past abuse,
Strike not from Law's firm hand that awful rod,
But leave it thence to drop for lack of use:
O speed the blessed hour, Almighty God!

XIV.

APOLOGY.

'The formal World relaxes her cold chain
For one who speaks in numbers; ampler scope
His utterance finds; and, conscious of the gain,
Imagination works with bolder hope
The cause of grateful Reason to sustain;
And, serving Truth, the heart more strongly beats
Against all barriers which his labor meets
In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.
Enough; — before us lay a painful road,
And guidance have I sought in duteous love
From Wisdom's heavenly Father. Hence hath flowed
Patience, with trust that, whatsoe'er the way
Each takes in this high matter, all may move
Cheered with the prospect of a brighter day.

1840.

NOTES.

Page 1.

"*The White Doe of Rylstone.*"

THE Poem of The White Doe of Rylstone is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled, "The Rising of the North." The tradition is as follows:—"About this time," not long after the Dissolution, "a White Doe," say the aged people of the neighborhood, "long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service; after the close of which, she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation." (DR. WHITAKER'S *History of the Deanery of Craven.*) Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad.

"Bolton Priory," says Dr. Whitaker in his excellent book, 'The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven, "stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

"Opposite to the east window of the Priory Church, the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out, instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process into undulating and spiral lines. To the South all is soft and delicious; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moderate reach of

the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

"But, after all, the glories of Bolton are on the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape, is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like inclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, &c., of the finest growth: on the right, a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of gray rock: on the left, a rising copse. Still forward, are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simon seat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

"About half a mile above Bolton the valley closes, and either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of gray rock jut out at intervals.

"This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the river, and the most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf: there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood inclosing a woody island; sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

"The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous STRID. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed on either side a broad strand of naked gritstone full of rock-basins, or 'pots of the Linn,' which bear witness to the restless impetuosity of so many Northern torrents. But if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like 'the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters,' heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

'The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite."

Page 3.

"*Action is transitory,*" *&c.*

This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago.

Page 4.

"*From Bolton's old monastic Tower.*"

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward in some building of superior height to the ridge."

Page 5.

"*A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest.*"

"The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution, for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English Cathedral."

Page 5.

"*Who sat in the shade of the Prior's Oak!*"

"At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for *70l.* According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber."

Page 12.

"*When Lady Aliza mourned.*"

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection, "The Force of Prayer."

Page 12.

'Pass, pass who will, yon chantry aoor."

"At the east end of the north aisle of Bolton Priory Church, is a chantry belonging to Bethmesly Hall, and a vault, where, according to tradition, the Claphams" (who inherited this estate by the female line, from the Mauleverers) "were interred upright." John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a man of great note in his time: "he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive."

Page 13.

"Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet."

In the second volume of these Poems will be found one entitled, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honors of his Ancestors." To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burns and Nicholson's History of Cumberland and Westmoreland. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him, from Dr. Whitaker, who says, he "retired to the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper's lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favorable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden.

"His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies; and, having purchased such an apparatus as could then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science.

"I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

"For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, &c., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

"In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

"He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23d, 1523, aged about 70. I shall endeavor to appropriate to him a tomb, vault, and chantry in the choir of the church of Bolton, as I should be sorry to believe that he was deposited, when dead, at a distance from the place which in his lifetime he loved so well.

"By his last will he appointed his body to be interred at Shap, if he died in Westmoreland; or at Bolton, if he died in Yorkshire."

With respect to the Canons of Bolton, Dr. Whitaker shows from MSS. that not only alchemy, but astronomy, was a favorite pursuit with them.

Page 25.

"*Now joy for you who from the towers*
Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear."

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr. Percy's account.

Page 33.

"Of mitred Thurston, — what a Host
He conquered!"

See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle usually denominated the Battle of the Standard.

Page 33.

"In that other day of Neville's Cross."

"In the night before the battle of Durham was strucken and begun, the 17th day of October, *anno* 1346, there did appear to John Fosser, then Prior of the Abbey of Durham, a Vision, commanding him to take the holy Corporax-cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Maid's Bower wont to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision, the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle: (a great multitude of Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty providence of Almighty God, and by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique.) And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the Englishmen and the King of Scots and his company the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies. And then the said Prior and monks accompanied with Ralph Lord Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanks

giving to God and Holy St. Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day."

The battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance: —

"On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone-work was erected and set up to the honor of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle." The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, "The Prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made," (which is then described at great length,) "and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax-cloth inclosed, &c., &c., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried and showed at any battle but, by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, it brought home victory; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean WHITTINGHAM, whose wife, called KATHARINE, being a French woman, (as is most credibly reported by eyewitnesses,) did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly reliques." — Extracted from a book entitled, "Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery." It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field.

Page 45.

"*An edifice of warlike frame*
Stands singe, — Norton Tower its name."

It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker: — "Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the

old warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds, (two of them are pretty entire,) of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

"The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch tower."

Page 60.

"*Despoil and desolation*
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown."

"After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2d or 3d of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland." From an accurate survey made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr. W. It appears that "the mansion-house was then in decay. Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivery, so called, undoubtedly, from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Vivarium: for there are near the house large remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary works, fish-ponds, and island, &c. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainder of Mr. Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tempest. The wood, it seems, had been abandoned to depredations, before which time it appears that the neighborhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey, among the old tenants, is mentioned one Richard Kitcher, butler to Mr. Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Ripon."

Page 64.

"*In the deep fork of Amerdale.*"

"At the extremity of the parish of Burnsal, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfdale, to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the northwest, is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment." — DR. WHITAKER.

Page 66.

"*When the bells of Rylstone played*
Their Sabbath music, — 'God us ayde!'"

On one of the bells of Rylstone Church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cipher, "I. N." for John Norton, and the motto, "God us ayde."

Page 68.

"*The grassy, rock-encircled Pound,*"

Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker: — "On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall stretching from the southwest to the northeast corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the north and west, where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that could stand on such ground.

"From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, &c. were far from being uncommon in the South of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was

probably taken that these inclosures should contain better feed than the neighboring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that, if the leader was once tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow."

I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery, Bolton Abbey and its neighborhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and the superintendence of it has for some years been intrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skilfully opened out its features; and, in whatever he has added has done justice to the place, by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of nature.

Page 72.

"*Ecclesiastical Sonnets.*"

During the month of December, 1820, I accompanied a much beloved and honored Friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season, — our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced, as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse. Accordingly, I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the reader was the result.

When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprised to find that my friend, Mr. Southey, had been engaged with similar views in writing a concise History of the Church in England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding

shall be found to illustrate each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, *January* 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of Sonnets: but the Reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the Poet only, — its difficulty.

Page 73.

"*Did Holy Paul*," *&c.*

Stillingfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this Sonnet refers to a favorite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to hereafter, in a passage upon the dissolution of monasteries.

Page 76.

"*That Hill, whose flowery platform*," *&c.*

This hill at St. Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a delicate feeling, delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works: —

Variis herbarum floribus depictus imo usquequaque vestitus, in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum æquoris natura complanat, dignum videlicet eum pro insita sibi specie venustatis jam olim reddens. qui beati martyris cruore dicatus etur."

Page 79.

"*Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid*
Of hallelujahs."

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus. — See Bede

Page 79.

"*By men yet scarcely conscious of a care*
For other monuments than those of Earth."

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose-writers are frequent, — obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularize Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wicliffe, and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

Page 80. Sonnet XII.

" Ethelforth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: 'If they are praying against us,' he exclaimed, 'they are fighting against us'; and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of ancient Britons, was consumed; half-ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice." — See Turner's valuable History of the Anglo-Saxons

Taliesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

The account Bede gives of this remarkable event suggests a most striking warning against national and religious prejudices.

Page 82. Sonnet xv.

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eyewitness: — "Longæ staturæ, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilenta, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu."

Page 82.

"*Man's life is like a Sparrow.*"

See the original of this speech in Bede. — The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting, — and the breaking up of this Council accompanied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. "Who, exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, shall first desecrate the altars and the temples? I, answered the Chief Priest; for who more fit than myself, through the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of others, what in foolishness I worshipped? Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a courser (equum emissarium); which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad; — he however halted not, but, approaching, he profaned the temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the temple, with all its inclosures. The place is shown where those idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham, ubi pontifex ille, inspirante Deo vero, polluit ac destruxit eas, *quas ipse sacraverat aras.*" The last

expression is a pleasing proof that the venerable monks of Wearmouth was familiar with the poetry of Virgil.

Page 83.

"*Such the inviting voice*
Heard near fresh streams," *&c.*

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers, for the convenience of baptism.

Page 84. Sonnet XIX.

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds: — "Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere pergens inveniretur, accurrebant, et flexa cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedici, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum præbebant." — Lib. III. cap. 26.

Page 88.

"*The people work like congregated bees.*"

See, in Turner's History, Vol. III. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence.

Page 89.

"*Pain narrows not his cares.*"

Throughout the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.

Page 91.

"*Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!*"

The violent measures carried on under the influence of Dunstan, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions. — See Turner

Page 100.

"*Here Man more purely lives,*' &c.

"Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius." — BERNARD. "This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistertian houses."

Page 107.

"*Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark.*"

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious: — and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarenians, or Paturins, from *pati*, to suffer.

> Dwellers with wolves, she names them, for the pine
> And green oak are their covert; as the gloom
> Of night oft foils their enemy's design,
> She calls them Riders on the flying broom,
> Sorcerers, whose frame and aspect have become
> One and the same through practices malign.

Page 111.

"*And the green lizard and the gilded newt*
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age."

These two lines are adopted from a MS., written about the year 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptuousness is taken from the same source, as is the verse, "Where Venus sits," &c., and the line, "Once ye were holy, ye are holy still," in a subsequent Sonnet.

Page 120.

"*One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)*
Transfigured," &c.

"M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his

hose, and his other array, which to looke unto was very simple. and being stripped into his shrowd, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see. and whereas in his clothes hee appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bold upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold. . . . . Then they brought a faggotte, kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at Doctor Ridley's feet. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner: "Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man: wee shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never bee put out." — *Fox's Acts, &c.*

Similar alterations in the outward figure and deportment of persons brought to like trial were not uncommon. See note to the above passage in Dr. Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography, for an example in an humble Welsh fisherman.

Page 123.

"*The gift exalting, and with playful smile.*"

'On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats

more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'" — See *Walton's Life of Richard Hooker.*

Page 125.

"*Craftily incites*
The overweening, personates the mad."

A common device in religious and political conflicts. — See Strype, in support of this instance.

Page 127.

"*Laud.*"

In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, "that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period." A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers: — "Ever since I came in place, I have labored nothing more than that the external public worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, *had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which while we live in the body needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigor.*"

Page 136.

"*The Pilgrim Fathers.*"

American Episcopacy in union with the Church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject; and I here make my acknowledgments to my American friends, Bishop Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia, for having suggested to me

the propriety of adverting to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, which so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America, by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous Works, and a "Sermon in Commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey."

Page 139.

"*A genial hearth*, ...
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion."

Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the country to which it belongs, may be reckoned as eminently important the examples of civility and refinement which the clergy stationed at intervals afford to the whole people. The Established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe, that their taste, as acting upon rural residences and scenery, often furnishes models which country gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence must be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of garden and architecture, which, if the place had belonged to a wealthy layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A parsonage-house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes favorable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegancies of life with the outward signs of piety and mortality. With pleasure I recall to mind a happy instance of this in the resi

fence of an old and much-valued friend in Oxfordshire. The house and church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn, or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling, no part of the burial-ground is seen; but as you wind by the side of the shrubs towards the steeple-end of the church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental headstone, moss grown, sinking into, and gently inclining towards, the earth. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens to the view. This humble and beautiful parsonage called forth a tribute, for which see the seventh of the "Miscellaneous Sonnets," Part III.

Page 148. Sonnet XXXII.

This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the "Rush-bearing."

Page 151.

"*Teaching us to forget them or forgive.*"

This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's History of Cambridge.

Page 152.

"*Had we, like them, endured*
Sore stress of apprehension."

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the "Protestant wind."

Page 154.

"*Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,*
Like men ashamed."

The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same.

Page 158.

"*Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name*
From roseate hues," *&c.*

Some say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a bolt of rock at its summit, — a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition.

Page 172.

"*Wings at my shoulders seem to play.*"

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of "Jacob's Dream," by Mr. Allston, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honor to rank among my friends.

Page 185.

"*But if thou, like Cocytus,*" *&c.*

Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that "the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A." Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the North of England, "*to greet*"; signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping: a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up *that* name till within three miles of its disappearance in the River Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wythburn, and flowing through Thirlmere, the beautiful features of which lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grasmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wythburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared

of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produce the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet.

"The scenery upon this river," says Mr. Southey in his Colloquies, "where it passes under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the finest and most rememberable kind: —

'Ambiguo lapsu refluitque fluitque,
Occurrensque sibi venturas ascipit undas.'"

Page 188.

"By hooded Votaresses," &c.

Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen.

Page 189.

Mary Queen of Scots landing at Workington.

"The fears and impatience of Mary were so great," says Robertson, "that she got into a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle." The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall (where she was received by Sir Henry Curven as became her rank and misfortunes) was long preserved, out of respect to her memory, as she had left it; but one cannot but regret that some necessary alterations in the mansion could not be effected without its destruction.

Page 190.

St. Bees' Heads, anciently called the Cliff of Barnath, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the northeast parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees; a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

"St. Bees," say Nicholson and Burns, "had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland, who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her.

'The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschiens, son of Ranulph and brother of Ranulph de Meschiens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York."

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighborhood; one of which is alluded to in these Stanzas; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkinson, M. A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventual Church has been repaired, under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ainger, the Head of the College; and is well worthy of being visited by any strangers who might be led to the neighborhood of this celebrated spot.

The form of stanza in this Poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the "St. Monica," a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously, but with true feeling for rural nature, at a time when nature was not much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns.

Page 193.

"Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred ties?"

I am aware that I am here treading upon tender ground; but to the intelligent reader I feel that no apology is due. The prayers of survivors, during passionate grief for the recent loss of relatives and friends, as the object of those prayers could no longer be the suffering body of the dying, would naturally be ejaculated for the souls of the departed; the barriers between the two worlds dissolving before the power of love and faith. The ministers of religion, from their habitual attendance upon sick-beds, would be daily witnesses of these benign results, and hence would be strongly tempted to aim at giving to them permanence, by embodying them in rites and ceremonies recurring at stated periods. All this, as it was in course of nature, so was it blameless, and even praiseworthy; since some of its effects, in that rude state of society, could not but be salutary. No reflecting person, however, can view without sorrow the abuses which rose out of thus formalizing sublime instincts, and disinterested movements of passion, and perverting them into means of gratifying the ambition and rapacity of the priesthood. But, while we deplore and are indignant at these abuses, it would be a great mistake if we imputed the origin of the offices to prospective selfishness on the part of the monks and clergy: *they* were at first sincere in their sympathy, and in their degree dupes rather of their own creed, than artful and designing men. Charity is, upon the whole, the safest guide that we can take in judging our fellow-men, whether of past ages or of the present time.

Page 199.

"And they are led by noble Hillary."

The TOWER of REFUGE, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the life-boat establishment, at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved.

Page 201.

"*By a retired Mariner.*"

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here.

Page 203.

"*Off with yon cloud, old Snafell!*"

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the "Vision," in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. "I found myself," says he, "on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years." It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance may not become still more striking as months and years advance!

Page 205.

"*On revisiting Dunolly Castle.*"

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some laborers employed about the place.

Page 209.

"*Cave of Staffa.*"

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the

steam-boat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favorable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind.

Page 211.

"*Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,*
Children of Summer!"

Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave, rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man; making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces.

Page 212.

"*Iona.*"

The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do.

Page 216.

"*Yet fetched from Paradise.*"

It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known also in the neighborhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word Dean, *a valley?* Langdale, near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principal feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows when the tide is out, over Cartmel sands, is called the Ea, — *eau*, French, — *aqua*, Latin.

Page 219.

"*Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!*"

At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of these works is thrown

over a deep glen or ravine, at a very short distance from the main stream.

Page 220.

"*A weight of awe, not easy to be borne.*"

The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number above ground a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came upon it by surprise, I might overrate its importance as an object; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say I have not seen any other relique of those dark ages, which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.

Page 221.

"*To the Earl of Lonsdale.*"

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials, which took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character, through the local press, had thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future.

Page 290.

"*Descending to the worm in charity.*"

I am indebted, here, to a passage in one of Mr. Digby's valuable works.

Page 325.

"*All change is perilous and all chance unsound.*"

SPENSER.

Page 327.

"*Men of the Western World.*"

These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions. A far more formidable, as being a more deliberate mischief, has appeared among those States, which have lately broken faith with the public creditor in a manner so infamous. I cannot, however, but look at both evils under a similar relation to inherent good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wipe off this stain from their name and nation.

I am happy to add that this anticipation is already partly realized; and that the reproach addressed to the Pennsylvanians in the next sonnet is no longer applicable to them. I trust that those other States to which it may yet apply will soon follow the example now set them by Philadelphia, and redeem their credit with the world.

1850.

END OF VOL. IV.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

I.

EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

From the Southwest Coast of Cumberland. — 1811.

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet Lake,
From the Vale's peace which all her fields partake,
Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's shore
We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless roar;
While, day by day, grim neighbor! huge Black Comb
Frowns, deepening visibly his native gloom,
Unless, perchance rejecting in despite
What on the Plain *we* have of warmth and light,
In his own storms he hides himself from sight.
Rough is the time; and thoughts, that would be free
From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to thee;
Turn from a spot where neither sheltered road
Nor hedge-row screer invites my steps abroad;

Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it might
Attained a stature twice a tall man's height,
Hopeless of further growth, and brown and sere
Through half the summer, stands with top cut sheer
Like an unshifting weathercock which proves
How cold the quarter that the wind best loves,
Or like a sentinel, that, evermore,
Darkening the window, ill defends the door
Of this unfinished house, — a Fortress bare,
Where strength has been the Builder's only care
Whose rugged walls may still for years demand
The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.
— This Dwelling's Inmate more than three weeks space
And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,
I — of whose touch the fiddle would complain,
Whose breath would labor at the flute in vain,
In music all unversed, nor blessed with skill
A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,
Tired of my books, a scanty company!
And tired of listening to the boisterous sea —
Pace between door and window, muttering rhyme,
An old resource to cheat a froward time!
Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their shame?)
Would tempt me to renounce that humble aim.
— But if there be a Muse who, free to take
Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake
Those heights, (like Phœbus when his golden locks
He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks,)

And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail
Trips down the pathways of some winding dale;
Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shores
To fishers mending nets beside their doors;
Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,
Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind,
Or listens to its play among the boughs
Above her head, and so forgets her vows, —
If such a Visitant of Earth there be,
And she would deign this day to smile on me
And aid my verse, content with local bounds
Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,
Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings, which we tell
Without reserve to those whom we love well, —
Then haply, Beaumont! words in current clear
Will flow, and on a welcome page appear
Duly before thy sight, unless they perish here.

What shall I treat of? News from Mona's Isle?
Such have we, but unvaried in its style;
No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence
And wherefore fugitive or on what pretence;
Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the wind,
Most restlessly alive when most confined.
Ask not of me, whose tongue can best appease
The mighty tumults of the House of Keys;
The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer gained,
What slopes are planted, or what mosses drained:
An eye of fancy only can I cast
On that proud pageant now at hand or past,

When full five hundred boats in trim array,
With nets and sails outspread and streamers gay
And chanted hymns and stiller voice of prayer,
For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep repair,
Soon as the herring-shoals at distance shine,
Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine.

Mona from our abode is daily seen,
But with a wilderness of waves between;
And by conjecture only can we speak
Of aught transacted there in bay or creek;
No tidings reach us hence from town or field,
Only faint news her mountain sunbeams yield,
And some we gather from the misty air,
And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph, declare.
But these poetic mysteries I withhold;
For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold,
And should the colder fit with you be on
When you might read, my credit would be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen engage,
And nearer interests, culled from the opening stage
Of our migration. — Ere the welcome dawn
Had from the east her silver star withdrawn,
The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-door,
Thoughtfully freighted with a various store;
And long or ere the uprising of the Sun,
O'er dew-damped dust our journey was begun,
A needful journey, under favoring skies,

Through peopled Vales ; yet something in the guise
Of those old Patriarchs when from well to well
They roamed through Wastes where now the tented Arabs dwell.

Say first, to whom did we the charge confide,
Who promptly undertook the Wain to guide
Up many a sharply twining road and down,
And over many a wide hill's craggy crown,
Through the quick turns of many a hollow nook,
And the rough bed of many an unbridged brook ?
A blooming Lass, — who in her better hand
Bore a light switch, her sceptre of command
When, yet a slender Girl, she often led,
Skilful and bold, the horse and burdened *sled* *
From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's head.
What could go wrong with such a Charioteer
For goods and chattels, or those Infants dear,
A Pair who smilingly sat side by side,
Our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide,
Whose free embraces we were bound to seek,
Would their lost strength restore and freshen the pale cheek ?
Such hope did either Parent entertain
Pacing behind along the silent lane.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon took flight,
For lo ! an uncouth, melancholy sight. —

* A local word for sledge.

On a green bank a creature stood forlorn,
Just half protruded to the light of morn,
Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row thorn.
The Figure called to mind a beast of prey
Stripped of its frightful powers by slow decay,
And, though no longer upon rapine bent,
Dim memory keeping of its old intent.
We started, looked again with anxious eyes,
And in that grisely object recognize
The Curate's Dog, — his long-tried friend, for they
As well we knew, together had grown gray.
The Master died, his drooping servant's grief
Found at the Widow's feet some sad relief;
Yet still he lived in pining discontent,
Sadness which no indulgence could prevent;
Hence whole day wanderings, broken nightly sleeps
And lonesome watch that out of doors he keeps;
Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute!
Espied him on his legs sustained, blank, mute,
And of all visible motion destitute,
So that the very heaving of his breath
Seemed stopped, though by some other power than death.
Long as we gazed upon the form and face,
A mild domestic pity kept its place,
Unscared by thronging fancies of strange hue
That haunted us in spite of what we knew.
Even now I sometimes think of him as lost
In second-sight appearances, or crost
By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the ground

On which he stood by spells unnatural bound,
Like a gaunt, shaggy Porter, forced to wait
In days of old romance at Archimago's gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law fulfilled,
The choristers in every grove had stilled;
But we, we lacked not music of our own,
For lightsome Fanny had thus early thrown,
'Mid the gay prattle of those infant tongues,
Some notes prelusive, from the round of songs
With which, more zealous than the liveliest bird
That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard,
Her work and her work's partners she can cheer
The whole day long, and all days of the year.

Thus gladdened, from our own dear Vale we pass,
And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass!
To Loughrigg Tarn, round, clear, and bright as heaven,
Such name Italian fancy would have given,
Ere on its banks the few gray cabins rose
That yet disturb not its concealed repose
More than the feeblest wind that idly blows.

Ah, Beaumont! when an opening in the road
Stopped me at once by charm of what it showed,
The encircling region vividly exprest
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest, —
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy *bield*,*

* A word common in the country, signifying shelter, as in Scotland.

And the smooth green of many a pendent field,
And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,
A little, daring would-be waterfall,
One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,
Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,
With here and there a faint imperfect gleam
Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam, —
What wonder, at this hour of stillness deep,
A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and sleep,
When Nature's self, amid such blending, seems
To render visible her own soft dreams,
If, mixed with what appeared of rock, lawn, wood
Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,
A glimpse I caught of that abode, by thee
Designed to rise in humble privacy.
A lowly dwelling, here to be outspread,
Like a small hamlet, with its bashful head
Half hid in native trees. Alas! 't is not,
Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot
Unconscious of its own untoward lot,
And thought in silence, with regret too keen,
Of unexperienced joys that might have been;
Of neighborhood and intermingling arts,
And golden summer days uniting cheerful hearts
But time, irrevocable time, is flown,
And let us utter thanks for blessings sown
And reaped, — what hath been, and what is, our own

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,
Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;

Such shout as, many a sportive echo meeting,
Ofttimes from Alpine *chalets* sends a greeting.
Whence the blithe hail? behold a Peasant stand
On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!
Not unexpectant that by early day
Our little Band would thrid this mountain way,
Before her cottage on the bright hill-side
She hath advanced with hope to be descried.
Right gladly answering signals we displayed,
Moving along a tract of morning shade,
And vocal wishes sent of like good-will
To our kind Friend high on the sunny hill, —
Luminous region, fair as if the prime
Were tempting all astir to look aloft or climb;
Only the centre of the shining cot
With door left open makes a gloomy spot,
Emblem of those dark corners sometimes found
Within the happiest breast on earthly ground.

Rich prospect left behind of stream and vale,
And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we scale;
Descend and reach, in Yewdale's depths, a plain
With haycocks studded, striped with yellowing grain, —
An area level as a Lake, and spread
Under a rock too steep for man to tread,
Where, sheltered from the north and bleak north-west,
Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest,
Fearless of all assaults that would her brood molest

Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but hark,
At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's bark,
Noise that brings forth no liveried Page of state,
But the whole household, that our coming wait.
With Young and Old warm greetings we exchange,
And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly Grange
Press forward, by the teasing dogs unscared.
Entering, we find the morning meal prepared:
So down we sit, though not till each had cast
Pleased looks around the delicate repast, —
Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh from the nest,
With amber honey from the mountain's breast;
Strawberries from lane or woodland, offering wild
Of children's industry, in hillocks piled;
Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie
Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality
Where simple art with bounteous nature vied,
And cottage comfort shunned not seemly pride.

Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the feast,
If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,
Words by thy presence unrestrained may speak
Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek
Instinct with light whose sweetest promise lies,
Never retiring, in thy large, dark eyes, —
Dark, but to every gentle feeling true,
As if their lustre flowed from ether's purest blue.

Let me not ask what tears may have been wept
By those bright eyes, what weary vigils kept,

Beside that hearth what sighs may have been heaved
For wounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved
By fortitude and patience, and the grace
Of Heaven in pity visiting the place.
Not unadvisedly those secret springs
I leave unsearched: enough that memory clings,
Here as elsewhere, to notices that make
Their own significance for hearts awake,
To rural incidents, whose genial powers
Filled with delight three summer morning hours.

More could my pen report of grave or gay
That through our gypsy travel cheered the way;
But, bursting forth above the waves, the Sun
Laughs at my pains, and seems to say, "Be done."
Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust, reprove
This humble offering made by Truth to Love,
Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break a spell
Which might have else been on me yet: —

FAREWELL.

Note. — LOUGHRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Dianæ* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes, as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written, Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COMPOSITION.

Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest
Take those dear young Ones to a fearless nest;
And in Death's arms has long reposed the Friend
For whom this simple Register was penned.
Thanks to the moth that spared it for our eyes;
And Strangers even the slighted Scroll may prize,
Moved by the touch of kindred sympathies.
For, save the calm repentance sheds o'er strife
Raised by remembrances of misused life,
The light from past endeavors purely willed
And by Heaven's favor happily fulfilled, —
Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth, may share
The joys of the Departed, — what so fair
As blameless pleasure, not without some tears,
Reviewed through Love's transparent veil of years?

here a summer retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. The design was not abandoned from failure of inclination on his part, but in consequence of local untowardness which need not be particularized.

II.

GOLD AND SILVER FISHES IN A VASE.

THE soaring lark is blest as proud
When at heaven's gate she sings;
The roving bee proclaims aloud
Her flight by vocal wings;
While ye, in lasting durance pent,
Your silent lives employ
For something more than dull content,
Though haply less than joy.

Yet might your glassy prison seem
A place where joy is known,
Where golden flash and silver gleam
Have meanings of their own;
While, high and low, and all about,
Your motions, glittering Elves!
Ye weave, — no danger from without,
And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast
Is your transparent cell;
Where Fear is but a transient guest,
No sullen Humors dwell;
Where, sensitive of every ray
That smites this tiny sea,
Your scaly panoplies repay
The loan with usury.

How beautiful! — Yet none knows why
This ever-graceful change,
Renewed, renewed incessantly,
Within your quiet range.
Is it that ye with conscious skill
For mutual pleasure glide;
And sometimes, not without your will,
Are dwarfed, or magnified?

Fays, Genii of gigantic size!
And now, in twilight dim,
Clustering like constellated eyes,
In wings of Cherubim,
When the fierce orbs abate their glare; —
Whate'er your forms express,
Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are, —
All leads to gentleness.

Cold though your nature be, 't is pure;
Your birthright is a fence
From all that haughtier kinds endure
Through tyranny of sense.
Ah! not alone by colors bright
Are ye to heaven allied,
When, like essential forms of light,
Ye mingle, or divide.

For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled
Day-thoughts while limbs repose;
For moonlight fascinations mild,
Your gift, ere shutters close, —

Accept, mute Captives! thanks and praise;
And may this tribute prove
That gentle admirations raise
Delight resembling love.

1819.

III.

LIBERTY.

(SEQUEL TO THE PRECEDING.)

[Addressed to a friend; the gold and silver fishes having been removed to a pool in the pleasure-ground of Rydal Mount.]

"The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made for themselves, under whatever form it be of government. The liberty of a private man, in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter we are here to discourse." — COWLEY.

THOSE breathing Tokens of your kind regard,
(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is hard;
Not soon does aught to which mild fancies cling
In lonely spots, become a slighted thing,)
Those silent Inmates now no longer share,
Nor do they need, our hospitable care,
Removed in kindness from their glassy Cell
To the fresh waters of a living Well,—
An elfin pool so sheltered that its rest
No winds disturb; the mirror of whose breast
Is smooth as clear, save where with dimples small

A fly may settle, or a blossom fall.
— *There* swims, of blazing sun and beating shower
Fearless, (but how obscured!) the golden Power
That from this bauble prison used to cast
Gleams by the richest jewel unsurpast;
And near him, darkling like a sullen Gnome,
The silver Tenant of the crystal dome;
Dissevered both from all the mysteries
Of hue and altering shape that charmed all eyes.
Alas! they pined, they languished while they shone;
And, if not so, what matters beauty gone
And admiration lost, by change of place
That brings to the inward creature no disgrace?
But if the change restore his birthright, then,
Whate'er the difference, boundless is the gain.
Who can divine what impulses from God
Reach the caged lark, within a town abode,
From his poor inch or two of daisied sod?
O yield him back his privilege! — No sea
Swells like the bosom of a man set free;
A wilderness is rich with liberty.
Roll on, ye spouting whales, who die or keep
Your independence in the fathomless Deep!
Spread, tiny nautilus, the living sail;
Dive, at thy choice, or brave the freshening gale
If unreproved the ambitious eagle mount
Sunward to seek the daylight in its fount,
Bays, gulfs, and ocean's Indian width shall be,
Till the world perishes, a field for thee!

While musing here I sit in shadow cool,
And watch these mute Companions, in the pool
(Among reflected boughs of leafy trees)
By glimpses caught, disporting at their ease,
Enlivened, braced, by hardy luxuries,
I ask what warrant fixed them (like a spell
Of witchcraft fixed them) in the crystal cell;
To wheel with languid motion round and round,
Beautiful, yet in mournful durance bound.
Their peace, perhaps, our lightest footfall marred;
On their quick sense our sweetest music jarred;
And whither could they dart, if seized with fear?
No sheltering stone, no tangled root was near.
When fire or taper ceased to cheer the room,
They wore away the night in starless gloom;
And, when the sun first dawned upon the streams,
How faint their portion of his vital beams!
Thus, and unable to complain, they fared,
While not one joy of ours by them was shared.

Is there a cherished bird (I venture now
To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's reverend brow) —
Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage,
Though sure of plaudits on his costly stage,
Though fed with dainties from the snow-white hand
Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land,
But gladly would escape; and, if need were,
Scatter the colors from the plumes that bear
The emancipated captive through blithe air
Into strange woods, where he at large may live

On best or worst which they and Nature give?
The beetle loves his unpretending track,
The snail the house he carries on his back;
The far-fetched worm with pleasure would disown
The bed we give him, though of softest down;
A noble instinct; in all kinds the same,
All ranks! What Sovereign, worthy of the name,
If doomed to breathe against his lawful will
An element that flatters him — to kill,
But would rejoice to barter outward show
For the least boon that freedom can bestow?

But most the Bard is true to inborn right,
Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night,
Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch
For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,
A natural meal,—days, months, from Nature's hand;
Time, place, and business, all at his command! —
Who bends to happier duties, who more wise,
Than the industrious Poet, taught to prize
Above all grandeur a pure life uncrossed
By cares in which simplicity is lost?
That life, the flowery path that winds by stealth
Which Horace needed for his spirit's health;
Sighed for, in heart and genius, overcome
By noise and strife, and questions wearisome,
And the vain splendors of Imperial Rome? —
Let easy mirth his social hours inspire,
And fiction animate his sportive lyre,
Attuned to verse that, crowning light Distress

With garlands, cheats her into happiness;
Give *me* the humblest note of those sad strains
Drawn forth by pressure of his gilded chains,
As a chance sunbeam from his memory fell
Upon the Sabine farm he loved so well;
Or when the prattle of Blandusia's spring
Haunted his ear, — he only listening, —
He proud to please, above all rivals, fit
To win the palm of gayety and wit;
He, doubt not, with involuntary dread,
Shrinking from each new favor to be shed,
By the world's Ruler, on his honored head!

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,
Such earnest longings and regrets as keen
Depressed the melancholy Cowley, laid
Under a fancied yew-tree's luckless shade;
A doleful bower for penitential song,
Where Man and Muse complained of mutual wrong
While Cam's ideal current glided by,
And antique towers nodded their foreheads high,
Citadels dear to studious privacy.
But Fortune, who had long been used to sport
With this tried Servant of a thankless Court,
Relenting met his wishes; and to you
The remnant of his days at least was true;
You, whom, though long deserted, he loved best;
You, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and rest!

Far happier they who, fixing hope and aim
On the humanities of peaceful fame

Enter betimes with more than martial fire
The generous course, aspire, and still aspire;
Upheld by warnings heeded not too late,
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,
And to one purpose cleave, their Being's godlike mate!

Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid brow
That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep *thy* vow;
With modest scorn reject whate'er would blind
The ethereal eyesight, cramp the wingèd mind!
Then, with a blessing granted from above
To every act, word, thought, and look of love,
Life's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till age
Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest page.*

1829.

* There is now, alas! no possibility of the anticipation, with which the above Epistle concludes, being realized: nor were the verses ever seen by the Individual for whom they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev. Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her way from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety steadfast; and her great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful in the difficult path of life to which she had been called. The opinion she entertained of her own performances, given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was modest and humble, and, indeed, far below their merits; as is often the case with those who are making trial of their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best fitted for. In one quality namely, quickness in the motions of her mind, she had, within the range of the Author's acquaintance, no equal.

IV.

POOR ROBIN.*

Now when the primrose makes a splendid show,
And lilies face the March-winds in full blow,
And humbler growths, as moved with one desire,
Put on, to welcome spring, their best attire,
Poor Robin is yet flowerless; but how gay
With his red stalks upon this sunny day!
And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads, content
With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,
Mixed with the green, some shine not lacking power
To rival summer's brightest scarlet flower;
And flowers they well might seem to passers-by
If looked at only with a careless eye;
Flowers, — or a richer produce (did it suit
The season), sprinklings of ripe strawberry fruit.

But while a thousand pleasures come unsought,
Why fix upon his wealth or want a thought?
Is the string touched in prelude to a lay
Of pretty fancies that would round him play
When all the world acknowledged elfin sway?
Or does it suit our humor to commend
Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,
Whose practice teaches, spite of names to show
Bright colors whether they deceive or no? —

* The small wild Geranium known by that name.

Nay, we would simply praise the free good-will
With which, though slighted, he, on naked hill
Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;
Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,
Or when his tiny gems shall deck his brow:
Yet more, we wish that men by men despised,
And such as lift their foreheads overprized,
Should sometimes think, where'er they chance to spy
This child of Nature's own humility,
What recompense is kept in store or left
For all that seem neglected or bereft;
With what nice care equivalents are given;
How just, how bountiful, the hand of Heaven.

MARCH, 1840.

V.

THE GLEANER.

(SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE.)

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,
Those locks from summer's golden skies,
That o'er thy brow are shed;
That cheek, — a kindling of the morn, —
That lip, — a rose-bud from the thorn, —
I saw; and Fancy sped
To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through soft air,
Of bliss that grows without a care,

And happiness that never flies, —
(How can it where love never dies?) —
Whispering of promise, where no blight
Can reach the innocent delight;
Where pity, to the mind conveyed
In pleasure, is the darkest shade
That Time, unwrinkled grandsire, flings
From his smoothly gliding wings.

What mortal form, what earthly face,
Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,
And mingle colors, that should breed
Such rapture, nor want power to feed;
For had thy charge been idle flowers,
Fair Damsel! o'er my captive mind,
To truth and sober reason blind,
'Mid that soft air, those long-lost bowers,
The sweet illusion might have hung, for hours.

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,
That touchingly bespeaks thee born
Life's daily tasks with them to share
Who, whether from their lowly bed
They rise, or rest the weary head,
Ponder the blessing they entreat
From Heaven, and *feel* what they repeat,
While they give utterance to the prayer
That asks for daily bread

1833.

VI.

TO A REDBREAST—(IN SICKNESS).

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,
And at my casement sing,
Though it should prove a farewell lay
And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy
The promise in thy song,
A charm, *that* thought cannot destroy,
Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour
Thy song would still be dear,
And with a more than earthly power
My passing Spirit cheer.

Then, little Bird, this boon confer:
Come, and my requiem sing,
Nor fail to be the harbinger
Of everlasting Spring.

S. H

VII.

I KNOW an aged Man constrained to dwell
In a large house of public charity,

Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,
With numbers near, alas! no company.

When he could creep about, at will, though poor
And forced to live on alms, this old Man fed
A Redbreast, one that to his cottage door
Came not, but in a lane partook his bread.

There, at the root of one particular tree,
An easy seat this worn-out Laborer found,
While Robin pecked the crumbs upon his knee
Laid one by one, or scattered on the ground.

Dear intercourse was theirs, day after day;
What signs of mutual gladness when they met!
Think of their common peace, their simple play,
The parting moment and its fond regret.

Months passed in love that failed not to fulfil,
In spite of season's change, its own demand,
By fluttering pinions here and busy bill;
There by caresses from a tremulous hand.

Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong
Was formed between the solitary pair,
That, when his fate had housed him 'mid a throng,
The Captive shunned all converse proffered there.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dead and gone;
But, [illegible] no evil hap his wishes crossed,

One living Stay was left, and on that one
Some recompense for all that he had lost.

O that the good old Man had power to prove,
By message sent through air or visible token,
That still he loves the Bird, and still must love;
That friendship lasts though fellowship is broken

1846.

VIII.

SONNET.

(TO AN OCTOGENARIAN.)

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time brings forth
No successors; and, lodged in memory,
If love exist no longer, it must die, —
Wanting accustomed food, must pass from earth,
Or never hope to reach a second birth.
This sad belief, the happiest that is left
To thousands, share not thou; howe'er bereft,
Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a dearth.
Though poor and destitute of friends thou art,
Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,
One to whom Heaven assigns that mournful part
The utmost solitude of age to face,
Still shall be left some corner of the heart
Where Love for living Thing can find a place.

1846

IX.

FLOATING ISLAND

These lines are by the Author of the Address to the Wind, &c., published heretofore along with my Poems. Those to a Redbreast are by a deceased female Relative.

HARMONIOUS Powers with Nature work
On sky, earth, river, lake, and sea;
Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and breeze,
All in one duteous task agree.

Once did I see a slip of earth
(By throbbing waves long undermined)
Loosed from its hold; how, no one knew,
But all might see it float, obedient to the wind;

Might see it, from the mossy shore
Dissevered, float upon the Lake,
Float with its crest of trees adorned
On which the warbling birds their pastime take.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find;
There berries ripen, flowerets bloom;
There insects live their lives, and die:
A peopled world it is; in size a tiny room.

And thus through many seasons' space
This little Island may survive;
But Nature, though we mark her not,
Will take away, may cease to give.

Perchance when you are wandering forth
Upon some vacant sunny day,
Without an object, hope, or fear,
Thither your eyes may turn, — the Isle is passed
away;

Buried beneath the glittering Lake,
Its place no longer to be found;
Yet the lost fragments shall remain
To fertilize some other ground.

D. W.

X.

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high
Her way pursuing among scattered clouds,
Where, ever and anon, her head she shrouds,
Hidden from view in dense obscurity.
But look, and to the watchful eye
A brightening edge will indicate that soon
We shall behold the struggling Moon
Break forth, again to walk the clear blue sky.

XI.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone
Wi' the auld moone in hir arme."
Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence, Percy's Reliques

Once I could hail (howe'er serene the sky)
The moon re-entering her monthly round,

No faculty yet given me to espy
The dusky Shape within her arms imbound,
That thin memento of effulgence lost
Which some have named her Predecessor's ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me shone,
Naught I perceived within it dull or dim;
All that appeared was suitable to one
Whose fancy had a thousand fields to skim;
To expectations spreading with wild growth,
And hope that kept with me her plighted troth.

I saw (ambition quickening at the view)
A silver boat launched on a boundless flood;
A pearly crest, like Dian's when it threw
Its brightest splendor round a leafy wood;
But not a hint from under-ground, no sign
Fit for the glimmering brow of Proserpine.

Or was it Dian's self that seemed to move
Before me? — nothing blemished the fair sight,
On her I looked whom jocund Fairies love,
Cynthia, who puts the *little* stars to flight,
And by that thinning magnifies the great,
For exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral Shape
As each new Moon obeyed the call of time,
If gloom fell on me, swift was my escape;
Such happy privilege hath life's gay Prime,

To see or not to see, as best may please
A buoyant Spirit, and a heart at ease.

Now, dazzling Stranger! when thou meet'st my glance,
Thy dark Associate ever I discern;
Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance
While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or stern;
Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that, to gain
Their fill of promised lustre, wait in vain.

So changes mortal Life with fleeting years;
A mournful change, should Reason fail to bring
The timely insight that can temper fears,
And from vicissitude remove its sting;
While Faith aspires to seats in that domain
Where joys are perfect, — neither wax nor wane.

1826.

XII.

TO THE LADY FLEMING,

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING FOR THE ERECTION OF RYDAL CHAPEL, WESTMORELAND.

I.

Blest is this Isle, — our native Land;
Where battlement and moated gate
Are objects only for the hand

Of hoary Time to decorate;
Where shady hamlet, town that breathes
Its busy smoke in social wreaths,
No rampart's stern defence require,
Naught but the heaven-directed spire,
And steeple tower (with pealing bells
Far heard), — our only citadels.

II.

O Lady! from a noble line
Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore
The spear, yet gave to works divine
A bounteous help in days of yore,
(As records mouldering in the Dell
Of Nightshade * haply yet may tell,)
Thee kindred aspirations moved
To build, within a vale beloved,
For Him upon whose high behests
All peace depends, all safety rests.

III.

How fondly will the woods embrace
This daughter of thy pious care,
Lifting her front with modest grace
To make a fair recess more fair,
And to exalt the passing hour,
Or soothe it with a healing power
Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled.

* Bekangs Ghyll, — or the dell of Nightshade, — in which stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low Furness.

Before this rugged soil was tilled,
Or human habitation rose
To interrupt the deep repose!

IV.

Well may the villagers rejoice!
Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,
Will be a hindrance to the voice
That would unite in prayer and praise;
More duly shall wild, wandering Youth
Receive the curb of sacred truth,
Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear
The Promise, with uplifted ear;
And all shall welcome the new ray
Imparted to their Sabbath-day.

V.

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,
His fancy cheated, that can see
A shade upon the future cast,
Of time's pathetic sanctity;
Can hear the monitory clock
Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock
At evening, when the ground beneath
Is ruffled o'er with cells of death;
Where happy generations lie,
Here tutored for eternity.

VI.

Lives there a man whose sole delights
Are trivial pomp and city noise,

Hardening a heart that loathes or slights
What every natural heart enjoys?
Who never caught a noontide dream
From murmur of a running stream·
Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
To him, their verdure from the fields;
And take the radiance from the clouds
In which the sun his setting shrouds?

VII.

A soul so pitiably forlorn,
If such do on this earth abide,
May season apathy with scorn,
May turn indifference to pride;
And still be not unblest, compared
With him who grovels, self-debarred
From all that lies within the scope
Of holy faith and Christian hope;
Or, shipwrecked, kindles on the coast
False fires, that others may be lost.

VIII.

Alas that such perverted zeal
Should spread on Britain's favored ground!
That public order, private weal,
Should e'er have felt or feared a wound
From champions of the desperate law
Which from their own blind hearts they draw
Who tempt their reason to deny
God, whom their passions dare defy,

And boast that they alone are free
Who reach this dire extremity;

IX.

But turn we from these "bold, bad" men;
The way, mild Lady! that hath led
Down to their "dark, opprobrious den,"
Is all too rough for thee to tread.
Softly as morning vapors glide
Down Rydal Cove from Fairfield's side,
Should move the tenor of *his* song
Who means to charity no wrong;
Whose offering gladly would accord
With this day's work, in thought and word.

X.

Heaven prosper it! may peace, and love,
And hope, and consolation, fall,
Through its meek influence, from above,
And penetrate the hearts of all;
All who, around the hallowed Fane,
Shall sojourn in this fair domain;
Grateful to thee, while service pure,
And ancient ordinance, shall endure.
For opportunity bestowed
To kneel together, and adore their God!

1822

XII.

ON THE SAME OCCASION.

Oh! gather whencesoe'er ye safely may
The help which slackening Piety requires;
Nor deem that he perforce must go astray
Who treads upon the footmarks of his sires.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west, but *why* is by few persons *exactly* known; nor, that the degree of deviation from *due* east often noticeable in the ancient ones was determined, in each particular case, by the point in the horizon at which the sun rose upon the day of the saint to whom the church was dedicated These observances of our ancestors, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following stanzas.

When, in the antique age of bow and spear
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,
Came ministers of peace intent to rear
The Mother Church in yon sequestered vale, —

Then to her Patron Saint a previous rite
Resounded with deep swell and solemn close,
Through unremitting vigils of the night,
Till from his couch the wished-for Sun uprose.

He rose, and straight, as by divine command,
They, who had waited for that sign to trace
Their work's foundation, gave with careful hand
To the high altar its determined place; —

Mindful of Him who, in the Orient born,
There lived, and on the cross his life resigned,
And who, from out the regions of the morn,
Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge mankind.

So taught *their* creed;—nor failed the eastern sky
'Mid these more awful feelings, to infuse
The sweet and natural hopes that shall not die,
Long as the sun his gladsome course renews.

For us hath such prelusive vigil ceased;
Yet still we plant, like men of elder days,
Our Christian altar faithful to the east,
Whence the tall window drinks the morning rays:

That obvious emblem giving to the eye
Of meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,
That symbol of the day-spring from on high,
Triumphant o'er the darkness of the grave.

1823.

XIV

THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE

Ere the Brothers through the gateway
Issued forth with old and young,
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed,
Which for ages there had hung.

Horn it was which none could sound,
No one upon living ground,
Save he who came as rightful Heir
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record
Had the House of Lucie born,
Who of right had held the Lordship
Claimed by proof upon the Horn:
Each at the appointed hour
Tried the Horn, — it owned his power;
He was acknowledged: and the blast
Which good Sir Eustace sounded was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,
And to Hubert thus said he:
"What I speak this horn shall witness
For thy better memory.
Hear, then, and neglect me not!
At this time, and on this spot,
The words are uttered from my heart,
As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

"On good service we are going
Life to risk by sea and land,
In which course if Christ our Saviour
Do my sinful soul demand,
Hither come thou back straightway,
Hubert, if alive that day;
Return, and sound the Horn, that we
May have a living House still left in thee!"

" Fear not," quickly answered Hubert;
" As I am thy father's son,
What thou askest, noble Brother,
With God's favor shall be done."
So were both right well content:
Forth they from the Castle went,
And at the head of their array
To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought, (the Lucies
Were a line for valor famed,)
And where'er their strokes alighted,
There the Saracens were tamed.
Whence, then, could it come, — the thought, —
By what evil spirit brought?
O, can a brave Man wish to take
His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's sake?

" Sir!" the Ruffians said to Hubert,
" Deep he lies in Jordan flood."
Stricken by this ill assurance,
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.
" Take your earnings." — O that I
Could have *seen* my Brother die!
It was a pang that vexed him then;
And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace!
Nor of him were tidings heard.
Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer
Back again to England steered.

To his Castle Hubert sped;
Nothing has he now to dread.
But silent and by stealth he came,
And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,
Night or day, at even or morn;
No one's eye had seen him enter,
No one's ear had heard the Horn.
But bold Hubert lives in glee:
Months and years went smilingly;
With plenty was his table spread,
And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters;
And, as good men do, he sate
At his board by these surrounded,
Flourishing in fair estate.
And while thus in open day
Once he sate, as old books say,
A blast was uttered from the Horn,
Where by the Castle gate it hung forlorn.

'T is the breath of good Sir Eustace!
He is come to claim his right:
Ancient castle, woods, and mountains
Hear the challenge with delight.
Hubert! though the blast be blown,
He is helpless and alone:
Thou hast a dungeon; speak the word!
And there he may be lodged, and thou be Lord.

Speak! — astounded Hubert cannot;
And, if power to speak he had,
All are daunted, all the household
Smitten to the heart, and sad.
'T is Sir Eustace; if it be
Living man, it must be he!
Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,
And by a postern gate he slunk away.

Long and long was he unheard of:
To his Brother then he came,
Made confession, asked forgiveness,
Asked it by a brother's name,
And by all the saints in heaven;
And of Eustace was forgiven:
Then in a convent went to hide
His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels
Had preserved from murderers' hands,
And from Pagan chains had rescued,
Lived with honor on his lands.
Sons he had, saw sons of theirs,
And through ages, heirs of heirs,
A long posterity renowned,
Sounded the Horn which they alone could sound.

1806.

XV.

GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL.

A TRUE STORY.

O, WHAT 's the matter? what 's the matter
What is 't that ails young Harry Gill?
That evermore his teeth they chatter,
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,
Good duffle gray, and flannel fine;
He has a blanket on his back,
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,
'T is all the same with Harry Gill;
The neighbors tell, and tell you truly,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
At night, at morning, and at noon,
'T is all the same with Harry Gill;
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still!

Young Harry was a lusty drover,
And who so stout of limb as he?
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;
His voice was like the voice of three.
Old Goody Blake was old and poor;
Ill fed she was and thinly clad;
And any man who passed her door
Might see how poor a hut she had

All day she spun in her poor dwelling:
And then her three hours' work at night,
Alas! 't was hardly worth the telling,
It would not pay for candle-light.
Remote from sheltered village-green,
On a hill's northern side she dwelt,
Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,
And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,
Two poor old Dames, as I have known,
Will often live in one small cottage;
But she, poor Woman! housed alone.
'T was well enough when summer came,
The long, warm, lightsome summer-day;
Then at her door the *canty* Dame
Would sit, as any linnet gay.

But when the ice our streams did fetter,
O then how her old bones would shake!
You would have said, if you had met her,
'T was a hard time for Goody Blake.
Her evenings then were dull and dead:
Sad case it was, as you may think,
For very cold to go to bed,
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her! whene'er in winter
The winds at night had made a rout,
And scattered many a lusty splinter
And many a rotten bough about.

Yet never had she, well or sick
As every man who knew her says,
A pile beforehand, turf or stick,
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,
And made her poor old bones to ache,
Could anything be more alluring
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake?
And, now and then, it must be said,
When her old bones were cold and chill,
She left her fire, or left her bed,
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill!

Now Harry he had long suspected
This trespass of old Goody Blake;
And vowed that she should be detected, —
That he on her would vengeance take.
And oft from his warm fire he 'd go,
And to the fields his road would take;
And there, at night, in frost and snow,
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,
Thus looking out did Harry stand:
The moon was full and shining clearly,
And crisp with frost the stubble land.
— He hears a noise, — he 's all awake, —
Again? — on tiptoe down the hill
He softly creeps, — 't is Goody Blake;
She 's at the hedge of Harry Gill!

Right glad was he when he beheld her:
Stick after stick did Goody pull:
He stood behind a bush of elder,
Till she had filled her apron full.
When with her load she turned about,
The by-way back again to take,
He started forward with a shout,
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,
And by the arm he held her fast,
And fiercely by the arm he shook her,
And cried, "I 've caught you then at last!"
Then Goody, who had nothing said,
Her bundle from her lap let fall;
And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed
To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,
While Harry held her by the arm, —
"God! who art never out of hearing,
O may he never more be warm!"
The cold, cold moon above her head,
Thus on her knees did Goody pray:
Young Harry heard what she had said;
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow
That he was cold and very chill:
His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,
Alas! that day for Harry Gill!

That day he wore a riding-coat,
But not a whit the warmer he:
Another was on Thursday brought,
And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'T was all in vain, a useless matter,
And blankets were about him pinned;
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,
Like a loose casement in the wind.
And Harry's flesh it fell away;
And all who see him say 't is plain,
That, live as long as live he may,
He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,
Abed or up, to young or old;
But ever to himself he mutters,
"Poor Harry Gill is very cold."
Abed or up, by night or day,
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.
Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,
Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

1798.

XVI.

PRELUDE,

PREFIXED TO THE VOLUME ENTITLED "POEMS CHIEFLY OF EARLY AND LATE YEARS."

In desultory walk through orchard grounds,
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have I paused
The while a Thrush, urged rather than restrained
By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his song
To his own genial instincts; and was heard
(Though not without some plaintive tones between)
To utter, above showers of blossom swept
From tossing boughs, the promise of a calm,
Which the unsheltered traveller might receive
With thankful spirit. The descant, and the wind
That seemed to play with it in love or scorn,
Encouraged and endeared the strain of words
That haply flowed from me, by fits of silence
Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my Book!
Charged with those lays, and others of like mood
Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,
Go, single, yet aspiring to be joined
With thy Forerunners that through many a year
Have faithfully prepared each other's way, —
Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled
When and wherever, in this changeful world,
Power hath been given to please for higher ends
Than pleasure only; gladdening to prepare

For wholesome sadness, troubling to refine,
Calming to raise; and, by a sapient Art
Diffused through all the mysteries of our Being.
Softening the toils and pains that have not ceased
To cast their shadows on our mother Earth
Since the primeval doom. Such is the grace
Which, though unsued for, fails not to descend
With heavenly inspiration; such the aim
That Reason dictates; and, as even the wish
Has virtue in it, why should hope to me
Be wanting, that sometimes, where fancied ills
Harass the mind and strip from off the bowers
Of private life their natural pleasantness,
A Voice — devoted to the love whose seeds
Are sown in every human breast, to beauty
Lodged within compass of the humblest sight,
To cheerful intercourse with wood and field,
And sympathy with man's substantial griefs —
Will not be heard in vain? And in those days
When unforeseen distress spreads far and wide
Among a People mournfully cast down,
Or into anger roused by venal words
In recklessness flung out to overturn
The judgment, and divert the general heart
From mutual good, some strain of thine, my Book!
Caught at propitious intervals, may win
Listeners who not unwillingly admit
Kindly emotion tending to console
And reconcile; and both with young and old

Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude
For benefits that still survive, by faith
In progress, under laws divine, maintained.

RYDAL MOUNT, *March* 26, 1842.

XVII.

TO A CHILD.

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts:
Of humblest Friends, bright Creature! scorn not one:
The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the Sun.

1834.

XVIII.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE COUNTESS OF LONSDALE NOV. 5, 1834.

LADY! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,
Among the Favored, favored not the least)
Left, 'mid the Records of this Book inscribed,
Deliberate traces, registers of thought

And feeling, suited to the place and time
That gave them birth: — months passed, and still this hand,
That had not been too timid to imprint
Words which the virtues of thy Lord inspired,
Was yet not bold enough to write of thee.
And why that scrupulous reserve? In sooth,
The blameless cause lay in the Theme itself.
Flowers are there many that delight to strive
With the sharp wind, and seem to court the shower,
Yet are by nature careless of the sun
Whether he shine on them or not; and some,
Where'er he moves along the unclouded sky,
Turn a broad front full on his fluttering beams:
Others do rather from their notice shrink,
Loving the dewy shade, — a humble band,
Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth,
Congenial with thy mind and character,
High-born Augusta!
Witness Towers, and Groves!
And thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the honored name
Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear witness
From thy most secret haunts; and ye Parterres,
Which She is pleased and proud to call her own,
Witness how oft upon my noble Friend
Mute offerings, tribute from an inward sense
Of admiration and respectful love,
Have waited, till the affections could no more
Endure that silence, and broke out in song

Snatches of music taken up and dropped,
Like those self-solacing, those under notes
Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal leaves
Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only mine,
The pleasure was, and no one heard the praise,
Checked, in the moment of its issue, checked
And reprehended, by a fancied blush
From the pure qualities that called it forth.

Thus Virtue lives debarred from Virtue's meed
Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil,
That, while it only spreads a softening charm
O'er features looked at by discerning eyes,
Hides half their beauty from the common gaze;
And thus, even on the exposed and breezy hill
Of lofty station, female goodness walks,
When side by side with lunar gentleness,
As in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor
(Such the immunities of low estate,
Plain Nature's enviable privilege,
Her sacred recompense for my wants)
Open their hearts before Thee, pouring out
All that they think and feel, with tears of joy,
And benedictions not unheard in heaven:
And friend in the ear of friend, where speech is free
To follow truth, is eloquent as they.

Then let the Book receive in these prompt lines
A just memorial; and thine eyes consent
To read that they, who mark thy course, behold

A life declining with the golden light
Of summer, in the season of sere leaves;
See cheerfulness undamped by stealing Time;
See studied kindness flow with easy stream,
Illustrated with inborn courtesy;
And an habitual disregard of self
Balanced by vigilance for others' weal.

And shall the Verse not tell of lighter gifts
With these ennobling attributes conjoined
And blended, in peculiar harmony,
By youth's surviving spirit? What agile grace!
A nymph-like liberty, in nymph-like form,
Beheld with wonder; whether floor or path
Thou tread; or sweep, borne on the managed steed,
Fleet as the shadows, over down or field,
Driven by strong winds at play among the clouds.

Yet one word more, — one farewell word, — a wish
Which came, but it has passed into a prayer, –
That, as thy sun in brightness is declining,
So — at an hour yet distant for *their* sakes
Whose tender love, here faltering on the way
Of a diviner love, will be forgiven, —
So may it set in peace, to rise again
For everlasting glory won by faith.

XIX.

GRACE DARLING.

Among the dwellers in the silent fields
The natural heart is touched, and public way
And crowded street resound with ballad strains,
Inspired by one whose very name bespeaks
Favor divine, exalting human love;
Whom, since her birth on bleak Northumbrian coast,
Known unto few, but prized as far as known,
A single Act endears to high and low
Through the whole land; — to Manhood, moved in spite
Of the world's freezing cares; to generous Youth
To Infancy, that lisps her praise; to Age
Whose eye reflects it, glistening through a tear
Of tremulous admiration. Such true fame
Awaits her *now;* but, verily, good deeds
Do no imperishable record find,
Save in the rolls of heaven, where hers may live
A theme for angels, when they celebrate
The high-souled virtues which forgetful earth
Has witnessed. O that winds and waves could speak
Of things which their united power called forth
From the pure depths of her humanity!
A Maiden gentle, yet, at duty's call,

Firm and unflinching as the Lighthouse reared
On the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-place;
Or like the invincible Rock itself, that braves,
Age after age, the hostile elements,
As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell.

All night the storm had raged, nor ceased, nor paused,
When, as day broke, the Maid, through mistv air,
Espies far off a Wreck, amid the surf,
Beating on one of those disastrous isles, —
Half of a Vessel, half, — no more; the rest
Had vanished, swallowed up with all that there
Had for the common safety striven in vain,
Or thither thronged for refuge. With quick glance
Daughter and Sire through optic-glass discern,
Clinging about the remnant of this Ship,
Creatures — how precious in the Maiden's sight!
For whom, belike, the old Man grieves still more
Than for their fellow-sufferers ingulfed
Where every parting agony is hushed,
And hope and fear mix not in further strife.
"But courage, Father! let us out to sea, —
A few may yet be saved." The Daughter's words,
Her earnest tone, and look beaming with faith,
Dispel the Father's doubts: nor do they lack
The noble-minded Mother's helping hand
To launch the boat; and with her blessing cheered.
And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,
Together they put forth Father and Child!

Each grasps an oar, and struggling on they go, —
Rivals in effort; and, alike intent
Here to elude and there surmount, they watch
The billows lengthening, mutually crossed
And shattered, and regathering their might;
As if the tumult by the Almighty's will
Were, in the conscious sea, roused and prolonged,
That woman's fortitude — so tried, so proved —
May brighten more and more!

True to the mark,
They stem the current of that perilous gorge,
Their arms still strengthening with the strengthening heart,
Though danger, as the Wreck is neared, becomes
More imminent. Not unseen do they approach;
And rapture, with varieties of fear
Incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames
Of those who, in that dauntless energy,
Foretaste deliverance; but the least perturbed
Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he perceives
That of the pair, — tossed on the waves to bring
Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life —
One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister,
Or, be the Visitant other than she seems,
A guardian Spirit sent from pitying Heaven,
In woman's shape. But why prolong the tale,
Casting weak words amid a host of thoughts
Armed to repel them? Every hazard faced
And difficulty mastered, with resolve

That no one breathing should be left to perish,
This last remainder of the crew are all
Placed in the little boat, then o'er the deep
Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,
And, in fulfilment of God's mercy, lodged
Within the sheltering Lighthouse. — Shout, ye
Waves!
Send forth a song of triumph. Waves and Winds,
Exult in this deliverance wrought through faith
In Him whose Providence your rage hath served!
Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert join!
And would that some immortal Voice — a Voice
Fitly attuned to all that gratitude
Breathes out from floor or couch, through pallid lips
Of the survivors — to the clouds might bear, —
Blended with praise of that parental love,
Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden grew
Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,
Though young so wise, though meek so resolute, —
Might carry to the clouds and to the stars,
Yea, to celestial Choirs, GRACE DARLING'S name!

1842.

XX.

THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE.

PART I.

Enough of rose-bud lips, and eyes
Like harebells bathed in dew,
Of cheek that with carnation vies,
And veins of violet hue:
Earth wants not beauty that may scorn
A likening to frail flowers;
Yea, to the stars, if they were born
For seasons and for hours.

Through Moscow's gates, with gold unbarred,
Stepped one at dead of night,
Whom such high beauty could not guard
From meditated blight;
By stealth she passed, and fled as fast
As doth the hunted fawn,
Nor stopped, till in the dappling east
Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,
Seven nights her course renewed.
Sustained by what her scrip might yield,
Or berries of the wood;
At length, in darkness travelling on,
When lowly doors were shut,
The haven of her hope she won,
Her Foster-mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof
I come," said she, "from far;
For I have left my Father's roof,
In terror of the Czar."
No answer did the Matron give,
No second look she cast,
But hung upon the Fugitive,
Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat
Beside the glimmering fire,
Bathed duteously her way-worn feet,
Prevented each desire: —
The cricket chirped, the house-dog dozed,
And on that simple bed,
Where she in childhood had reposed,
Now rests her weary head.

When she, whose couch had been the sod,
Whose curtain, pine or thorn,
Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,
Who comforts the forlorn;
While over her the Matron bent,
Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole
Feeling from limbs with travel spent,
And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,
And soon again was dight
In those unworthy vestments worn
Through long and perilous flight;

And "O beloved Nurse!" she said,
"My thanks with silent tears
Have unto Heaven and you been paid:
Now listen to my fears!

"Have you forgot" — and here she smiled —
"The babbling flatteries
You lavished on me when a child
Disporting round your knees?
I was your lambkin, and your bird,
Your star, your gem, your flower:
Light words, that were more lightly heard
In many a cloudless hour!

"The blossom you so fondly praised
Is come to bitter fruit;
A mighty one upon me gazed;
I spurned his lawless suit.
And must be hidden from his wrath:
You, Foster-father dear
Will guide me in my forward path;
I may not tarry here!

"I cannot bring to utter woe
Your proved fidelity." —
"Dear Child, sweet Mistress, say not so!
For you we both would die." —
"Nay, nay, I come with semblance feigned
And cheek embrowned by art:
Yet, being inwardly unstained,
With courage will depart."

"But whither would you, could you, flee?
A poor man's counsel take;
The Holy Virgin gives to me
A thought for your dear sake;
Rest, shielded by our Lady's grace,
And soon shall you be led
Forth to a safe abiding-place,
Where never foot doth tread."

PART II.

The dwelling of this faithful pair
In a straggling village stood,
For one who breathed unquiet air
A dangerous neighborhood;
But wide around lay forest ground
With thickets rough and blind;
And pine-trees made a heavy shade
Impervious to the wind.

And there, sequestered from the sight,
Was spread a treacherous swamp,
On which the noonday sun shed light
As from a lonely lamp;
And midway in the unsafe morass
A single Island rose,
Of firm dry ground with healthful grass
Adorned, and shady boughs.

The Woodman knew, for such the craft
This Russian vassal plied,
That never fowler's gun, nor shaft
Of archer, there was tried;
A sanctuary seemed the spot
From all intrusion free;
And there he planned an artful Cot
For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains, unchecked by dread
Of Power's far-stretching hand,
The bold, good Man his labor sped
At Nature's pure command;
Heart-soothed, and busy as a wren,
While, in a hollow nook,
She moulds her sight-eluding den
Above a murmuring brook.

His task accomplished to his mind,
The twain, ere break of day
Creep forth, and through the forest wind
Their solitary way;
Few words they speak, nor dare to slack
Their pace from mile to mile,
Till they have crossed the quaking marsh,
And reached the lonely Isle.

The sun above the pine-trees showed
A bright and cheerful face,
And Ina looked for her abode,
The promised hiding-place;

She sought in vain: the Woodman smiled;
No threshold could be seen,
Nor roof, nor window; — all seemed wild
As it had ever been.

Advancing, you might guess an hour,
The front with such nice care
Is masked, "if house it be or bower,"
But in they entered are;
As shaggy as were wall and roof
With branches intertwined,
So smooth was all within, air-proof,
And delicately lined:

And hearth was there, and maple dish,
And cups in seemly rows,
And couch, — all ready to a wish
For nurture or repose;
And Heaven doth to her virtue grant
That there she may abide
In solitude, with every want
By cautious love supplied.

No queen, before a shouting crowd,
Led on in bridal state,
E'er struggled with a heart so proud,
Entering her palace gate;
Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,
No saintly anchoress
E'er took possession of her cell
With deeper thankfulness.

"Father of all, upon thy care
And mercy am I thrown;
Be thou my safeguard!"—such her prayer
When she was left alone,
Kneeling amid the wilderness
When joy had passed away,
And smiles, fond efforts of distress
To hide what they betray!

The prayer is heard, the Saints have seen,
Diffused through form and face,
Resolves devotedly serene;
That monumental grace
Of Faith, which doth all passions tame
That Reason *should* control;
And shows in the untrembling frame
A statue of the soul.

PART III.

'T is sung in ancient minstrelsy
That Phœbus wont to wear
The leaves of any pleasant tree
Around his golden hair;
Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit
Of his imperious love,
At her own prayer transformed, took root,
A laurel in the grove.

Then did the penitent adorn
His brow with laurel green;
And 'mid his bright locks never shorn
No meaner leaf was seen;
And poets sage, through every age,
About their temples wound
The bay; and conquerors thanked the Gods
With laurel chaplets crowned.

Into the mists of fabling Time
So far runs back the praise
Of beauty, that disdains to climb
Along forbidden ways;
That scorns temptation; power defies
Where mutual love is not;
And to the tomb for rescue flies
When life would be a blot.

To this fair Votaress, a fate
More mild doth Heaven ordain
Upon her Island desolate;
And words, not breathed in vain,
Might tell what intercourse she found
Her silence to endear;
What birds she tamed, what flowers the ground
Sent forth her peace to cheer.

To one mute Presence, above all
Her soothed affections clung,
A picture on the cabin wall
By Russian usage hung, —

The Mother-maid, whose countenance bright
With love abridged the day;
And, communed with by taper light,
Chased spectral fears away.

And oft, as either Guardian came,
The joy in that retreat
Might any common friendship shame,
So high their hearts would beat;
And to the lone Recluse, whate'er
They brought, each visiting
Was like the crowding of the year
With a new burst of spring.

But when she of her Parents thought,
The pang was hard to bear;
And, if with all things not enwrought,
That trouble still is near.
Before her flight she had not dared
Their constancy to prove;
Too much the heroic Daughter feared
The weakness of their love.

Dark is the past to them, and dark
The future still must be,
Till pitying Saints conduct her bark
Into a safer sea, —
Or gentle Nature close her eyes,
And set her Spirit free
From the altar of this sacrifice,
In vestal purity.

Yet, when above the forest-glooms
The white swans southward passed,
High as the pitch of their swift plumes
Her fancy rode the blast;
And bore her toward the fields of France,
Her Father's native land,
To mingle in the rustic dance,
The happiest of the band!

Of those belovèd fields she oft
Had heard her Father tell
In phrase that now with echoes soft
Haunted her lonely cell;
She saw the hereditary bowers,
She heard the ancestral stream;
The Kremlin and its haughty towers
Forgotten like a dream!

PART IV.

THE ever-changing Moon had traced
Twelve times her monthly round,
When through the unfrequented Waste
Was heard a startling sound;
A shout thrice sent from one who chased
At speed a wounded deer,
Bounding through branches interlaced,
And where the wood was clear.

The fainting creature took the marsh,
And toward the Island fled,
While plovers screamed, with tumult harsh,
Above his antlered head;
This Ina saw, and, pale with fear,
Shrunk to her citadel;
The desperate deer rushed on, and near
The tangled covert fell.

Across the marsh, the game in view,
The Hunter followed fast,
Nor paused, till o'er the stag he blew
A death-proclaiming blast;
Then, resting on her upright mind,
Came forth the Maid. "In me
Behold," she said, "a stricken Hind
Pursued by destiny!

"From your deportment, Sir! I deem
That you have worn a sword,
And will not hold in light esteem
A suffering woman's word;
There is my covert, there perchance
I might have lain concealed,
My fortunes hid, my countenance
Not even to you revealed.

"Tears might be shed, and I might pray,
Crouching and terrified,
That what has been unveiled to-day
You would in mystery hide;

But I will not defile with dust
The knee that bends to adore
The God in heaven;—attend, be just;
This ask I, and no more!

"I speak not of the winter's cold,
For summer's heat exchanged,
While I have lodged in this rough hold,
From social life estranged;
Nor yet of trouble and alarms:
High Heaven is my defence;
And every season has soft arms
For injured Innocence.

"From Moscow to the Wilderness
It was my choice to come,
Lest virtue should be harborless,
And honor want a home;
And happy were I, if the Czar
Retain his lawless will,
To end life here like this poor deer,
Or a lamb on a green hill."

"Are you the Maid," the Stranger cried,
"From Gallic parents sprung,
Whose vanishing was rumored wide,
Sad theme for every tongue?
Who foiled an Emperor's eager quest?
You, Lady, forced to wear
These rude habiliments, and rest
Your head in this dark lair!"

But wonder, pity, soon were quelled;
And in her face and mien
The soul's pure brightness he beheld
Without a veil between:
He loved, he hoped, — a holy flame
Kindled 'mid rapturous tears;
The passion of a moment came
As on the wings of years.

"Such bounty is no gift of chance,"
Exclaimed he; "righteous Heaven,
Preparing your deliverance,
To me the charge hath given.
The Czar full oft in words and deeds
Is stormy and self-willed;
But when the Lady Catherine pleads,
His violence is stilled.

"Leave open to my wish the course,
And I to her will go;
From that humane and heavenly source
Good, only good, can flow."
Faint sanction given, the Cavalier
Was eager to depart,
Though question followed question, dear
To the Maiden's filial heart.

Light was his step, — his hopes, more light,
Kept pace with his desires;
And the fifth morning gave him sight
Of Moscow's glittering spires.

He sued: — heart-smitten by the wrong,
To the lorn Fugitive
The Emperor sent a pledge as strong
As sovereign power could give.

A more than mighty change! If e'er
Amazement rose to pain,
And joy's excess produced a fear
Of something void and vain,
'T was when the Parents, who had mourned
So long the lost as dead,
Beheld their only Child returned,
The household floor to tread.

Soon gratitude gave way to love
Within the Maiden's breast:
Delivered and Deliverer move
In bridal garments drest;
Meek Catherine had her own reward;
The Czar bestowed a dower;
And universal Moscow shared
The triumph of that hour.

Flowers strewed the ground; the nuptial feast
Was held with costly state;
And there, 'mid many a noble guest,
The Foster-parents sate;
Encouraged by the imperial eye,
They shrank not into shade;
Great was their bliss, the honor high
To them and nature paid!

1830

INSCRIPTIONS.

I.

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE SEAT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., LEICESTERSHIRE.

1808.

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine
Will not unwillingly their place resign,
If but the Cedar thrive that near them stands,
Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.
One wooed the silent Art with studious pains:
These groves have heard the other's pensive strains;
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite
By interchange of knowledge and delight.
May Nature's kindliest powers sustain the Tree,
And Love protect it from all injury!
And when its potent branches, wide out-thrown,
Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,
Here may some Painter sit in future days,
Some future Poet meditate his lays;
Not mindless of that distant age renowned

When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,
The haunt of him who sang how spear and shield
In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field;
And of that famous Youth, full soon removed
From earth, perhaps by Shakespeare's self approved,
Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend beloved.

II.

IN A GARDEN OF THE SAME.

Oft is the medal faithful to its trust
When temples, columns, towers, are laid in dust;
And 't is a common ordinance of fate
That things obscure and small outlive the great:
Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery trim
Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,
And all its stately trees, are passed away,
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,
Perchance may still survive. And be it known
That it was scoped within the living stone, —
Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains
Of laborer plodding for his daily gains,
But by an industry that wrought in love;
With help from female hands, that proudly strove
To aid the work, what time these walks and bowers
Were shaped to cheer dark Winter's lonely hours

III.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME, FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE TERMINATION OF A NEWLY PLANTED AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS.

Ye Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn,
Shoot forth with livelier power at Spring's return
And be not slow a stately growth to rear
Of pillars, branching off from year to year,
Till they have learned to frame a darksome aisle; —
That may recall to mind that awful Pile
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest dead,
In the last sanctity of fame is laid.
— There, though by right the excelling Painter sleep
Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath keep,
Yet not the less his Spirit would hold dear
Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private tear
Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I
Raised this frail tribute to his memory;
From youth a zealous follower of the Art
That he professed; attached to him in heart;
Admiring, loving, and with grief and pride
Feeling what England lost when Reynolds died.

IV

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF COLEORTON.

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,
Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest ground,
Stand yet, but, Stranger! hidden from thy view,
The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU;
Erst a religious House, which day and night
With hymns resounded, and the chanted rite:
And when those rites had ceased, the Spot gave birth
To honorable Men of various worth:
There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager child;
There, under shadow of the neighboring rocks,
Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their flocks;
Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,
Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy dreams
Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous rage,
With which his genius shook the buskined stage.
Communities are lost, and Empires die,
And things of holy use unhallowed lie;
They perish; — but the Intellect can raise,
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er decays.

1808.

V.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE IN THE WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT GRASMERE.

RUDE is this Edifice, and thou hast seen
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
Proportions more harmonious, and approached
To closer fellowship with ideal grace.
But take it in good part: — alas! the poor
Vitruvius of our village had no help
From the great City; never, upon leaves
Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,
In long succession, pre-existing ghosts
Of Beauties yet unborn, — the rustic Lodge
Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,
Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,
Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined hermitage.
Thou seest a homely Pile, yet to these walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
And hither does one Poet sometimes row
His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
With plenteous store of heath and withered fern
(A lading which he with his sickle cuts,
Among the mountains,) and beneath this roof
He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the Sheep,
Panting beneath the burden of their wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part

Of his own Household: nor, while from his bed
He looks, through the open door-place, toward
the lake
And to the stirring breezes, does he want
Creations lovely as the work of sleep, —
Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy!

VI.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL ON A STONE, ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB.

STAY, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy limbs
On this commodious Seat! for much remains
Of hard ascent before thou reach the top
Of this huge Eminence, — from blackness named
And to far-travelled storms of sea and land
A favorite spot of tournament and war!
But thee may no such boisterous visitants
Molest; may gentle breezes fan thy brow;
And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air
Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,
From centre to circumference unveiled!
Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,
That on the summit whither thou art bound
A geographic Laborer pitched his tent,
With books supplied and instruments of art,
To measure height and distance; lonely task,
Week after week pursued! — To him was given

Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestowed
On timid man) of Nature's processes
Upon the exalted hills. He made report
That once, while there he plied his studious work
Within that canvas Dwelling, colors, lines,
And the whole surface of the out-spread map,
Became invisible: for all around
Had darkness fallen, — unthreatened, unproclaimed, —
As if the golden day itself had been
Extinguished in a moment; total gloom,
In which he sat alone, with unclosed eyes,
Upon the blinded mountain's silent top!

1818.

VII.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY, UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL.

Stranger! this hillock of misshapen stones
Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the Cairn
Of some old British Chief: 't is nothing more
Than the rude embryo of a little Dome
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be built
Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned

That from the shore a full-grown man might wade,
And make himself a freeman of this spot
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight
Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
Are monuments of his unfinished task.
The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
Was once selected as the corner-stone
Of that intended Pile, which would have been
Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill,
So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
And other little builders who dwell here,
Had wondered at the work. But blame him not,
For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,
Bred in this vale, to which he appertained
With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,
And for the outrage which he had devised,
Entire forgiveness! — But if thou art one
On fire with thy impatience to become
An inmate of these mountains, — if, disturbed
By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
Out of the quiet rock the elements
Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze
In snow-white splendor, — think again; and, taught
By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose:
There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
And let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.

1800.

VIII.

In these fair vales hath many a Tree
At Wordsworth's suit been spared;
And from the builder's hand this Stone,
For some rude beauty of its own,
Was rescued by the Bard:
So let it rest; and time will come
When here the tender-hearted
May heave a gentle sigh for him,
As one of the departed.

1830.

IX.

The massy Ways, carried across these heights
By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,
Or hidden under ground, like sleeping worms.
How venture then to hope that Time will spare
This humble Walk? Yet on the mountain's side
A Poet's hand first shaped it; and the steps
Of that same Bard — repeated to and fro
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight skies
Through the vicissitudes of many a year —
Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its gray line.
No longer, scattering to the heedless winds
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,
Shall he frequent these precincts; locked no more

In earnest converse with beloved Friends,
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss.
As from the beds and borders of a garden
Choice flowers are gathered! But, if Power may
spring
Out of a farewell yearning, — favored more
Than kindred wishes mated suitably
With vain regrets, — the Exile would consign
This Walk, his loved possession, to the care
Of those pure Minds that reverence the Muse.

1826

X.

INSCRIPTIONS SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN AND NEAR A HERMIT'S CELL.

1818.

I.

Hopes, what are they? — Beads of morning
Strung on slender blades of grass;
Or a spider's web adorning
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy,
Whispering harm where harm is not,
And deluding the unwary
Till the fatal bolt is shot?

What is glory? — in the socket
See how dying tapers fare!
What is pride? — a whizzing rocket
That would emulate a star.

What is friendship? — do not trust her,
Nor the vows which she has made;
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth? — a staff rejected;
Duty? — an unwelcome clog;
Joy? — a moon by fits reflected
In a swamp or watery bog;

Bright, as if through ether steering,
To the Traveller's eye it shone:
He hath hailed it reappearing, —
And as quickly it is gone;

Such is Joy, — as quickly hidden,
Or misshapen to the sight,
And by sullen weeds forbidden
To resume its native light.

What is youth? — a dancing billow,
(Winds behind, and rocks before!)
Age? — a drooping, tottering willow
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace? — when pain is over
And love ceases to rebel,
Let the last faint sight discover
That precedes the passing-knell!

XI.

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK.

II.

PAUSE, Traveller! whosoe'er thou be
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,
Where silence yields reluctantly
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,
And fear not lest an idle sound
Of words unsuited to the place
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,
Uphold a Monument as fair
As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,
Like marble, white, like ether, pure;
As if, beneath, some hero lay,
Honored with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed;
And, ever as the sun shone forth,
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile,
Unsound as those which Fortune builds,
To undermine with secret guile,
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground;
And naked left this dripping Rock,
With shapeless ruin spread around!

XII.

III.

Hast thou seen, with flash incessant,
Bubbles gliding under ice,
Bodied forth and evanescent,
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts! — A wind-swept meadow
Mimicking a troubled sea,
Such is life; and death a shadow
From the rock eternity!

XIII.

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE.

IV.

TROUBLED long with warring notions
Long impatient of thy rod,
I resign my soul's emotions
Unto Thee, mysterious God!

What avails the kindly shelter
Yielded by this craggy rent,
If my spirit toss and welter
On the waves of discontent?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
To consume this crystal Well;
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonoring not her station,
Would my Life present to Thee,
Gracious God, the pure oblation
Of divine tranquillity!

XIV.

V.

NOT seldom, clad in radiant vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;

Not seldom Evening in the west
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding Bark, untrue;
And, if she trust the stars above,
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,
Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word
No change can falsify!

I bent before thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;
And peace was given, — nor peace alone,
But faith sublimed to ecstasy!

XV.

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND, DERWENT-WATER.

If thou in the dear love of some one Friend
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts

Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not unmoved
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,
In utter solitude. — But he had left
A Fellow-laborer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And when, with eye upraised
To heaven, he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the Lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he: — as our chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
Those holy Men both died in the same hour.

1800

XVI.

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM.

Behold an emblem of our human mind,
Crowded with thoughts that need a settled home,
Yet, like to eddying balls of foam
Within this whirlpool, they each other chase
Round and round, and neither find
An outlet nor a resting-place!
Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,
Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.

SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER

MODERNIZED.

I.

THE PRIORESS' TALE.

"Call up him who left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold."

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author: so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *alsò* and *alwày*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine back-ground for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

I.

"O LORD, our Lord! how wondrously," quoth she,
"Thy name in this large world is spread abroad!
For not alone by men of dignity
Thy worship is performed and precious laud;

But by the mouths of children, gracious God!
Thy goodness is set forth; they when they lie
Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

II.

Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I may,
Jesu! of thee, and the white Lily-flower
Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for aye,
To tell a story I will use my power;
Not that I may increase her honor's dower,
For she herself is honor, and the root
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best boot.

III.

O Mother Maid! O Maid and Mother free!
O bush unburnt! burning in Moses' sight!
That down didst ravish from the Deity,
Through humbleness, the spirit that did alight
Upon thy heart, whence, through that glory's might
Conceivèd was the Father's sapience,
Help me to tell it in thy reverence!

IV.

Lady! thy goodness, thy magnificence,
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,
Surpass all science and all utterance;
For sometimes, Lady! ere men pray to thee
Thou goest before in thy benignity,
The light to us vouchsafing to our prayer,
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

v.

My knowledge is so weak, O blissful Queen!
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,
That I the weight of it may not sustain:
But as a child of twelve months old or less,
That laboreth his language to express,
Even so fare I; and therefore, I thee pray,
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall say.

vi.

There was in Asia, in a mighty town,
'Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews might be,
Assigned to them and given them for their own
By a great Lord, for gain and usury,
Hateful to Christ and to his company;
And through this street who list might ride and wend;
Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

vii.

A little school of Christian people stood
Down at the further end, in which there were
A nest of children come of Christian blood,
That learnèd in that school from year to year
Such sort of doctrine as men usèd there,
That is to say, to sing and read alsò,
As little children in their childhood do.

viii.

Among these children was a Widow's son,
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,
Who day by day unto this school hath gone,

And eke, when he the image did behold
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,
This Child was wont to kneel adown and say
Ave Marie, as he goeth by the way.

IX.

This Widow thus her little Son hath taught
Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,
To worship aye, and he forgat it not;
For simple infant hath a ready ear.
Sweet is the holiness of youth: and hence,
Calling to mind this matter when I may,
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth aye,
For he so young to Christ did reverence.

X.

This little Child, while in the school he sat
His Primer conning with an earnest cheer,
The whilst the rest their anthem-book repeat
The *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear;
And as he durst he drew him near and near,
And hearkened to the words and to the note,
Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

XI.

This Latin knew he nothing what it said,
For he too tender was of age to know;
But to his comrade he repaired, and prayed
That he the meaning of this song would show,
And unto him declare why men sing so;
This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,
This child did him beseech on his bare knees.

XII.

His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,
Answered him thus: 'This song, I have heard say,
Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free;
Her to salute, and also her to pray
To be our help upon our dying day:
If there is more in this, I know it not;
Song do I learn, — small grammar I have got.'

XIII.

And is this song fashioned in reverence
Of Jesu's Mother?' said this Innocent;
'Now, certès, I will use my diligence
To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent;
Although I for my Primer shall be shent,
And shall be beaten three times in an hour,
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.'

XIV.

His Schoolfellow, whom he had so besought,
As they went homeward, taught him privily,
And then he sang it well and fearlessly,
From word to word according to the note:
Twice in a day it passèd through his throat;
Homeward and schoolward whensoe'er he went,
On Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

XV.

Through all the Jewry (this before said I)
This little Child, as he came to and fro,
Full merrily then would he sing and cry,

O Alma Redemptoris! high and low:
The sweetness of Christ's Mother piercèd so
His heart, that her to praise, to her to pray,
He cannot stop his singing by the way.

XVI

The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hath
His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswelled. 'O woe
O Hebrew people!' said he in his wrath,
'Is it an honest thing? Shall this be so?
That such a Boy where'er he lists shall go
In your despite, and sing his hymns and saws,
Which is against the reverence of our laws!'

XVII.

From that day forward have the Jews conspired
Out of the world this Innocent to chase;
And to this end a Homicide they hired,
That in an alley had a privy place,
And, as the Child 'gan to the school to pace,
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

XVIII.

I say that him into a pit they threw,
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents exhale:
O cursed folk! away, ye Herods new!
What may your ill intentions you avail?
Murder will out; certès it will not fail;
Know, that the honor of high God may spread,
The blood cries out on your accursèd deed.

XIX.

O Martyr 'stablished in virginity!
Now mayst thou sing aye before the throne,
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,
"Of which the great Evangelist, Saint John,
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that go
Before the Lamb singing continually,
That never fleshly woman they did know.

XX.

Now this poor widow waiteth all that night
After her little Child, and he came not;
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning light,
With face all pale with dread and busy thought,
She at the School and elsewhere him hath sought,
Until thus far she learned, that he had been
In the Jews' street, and there he last was seen.

XXI.

With Mother's pity in her breast inclosed
She goeth, as she were half out of her mind,
To every place wherein she hath supposed
By likelihood her little Son to find;
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind
She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,
And him among the accursèd Jews she sought.

XXII.

She asketh, and she piteously doth pray
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place,
To tell her if her child had passed that way;

They all said, Nay; but Jesu of his grace
Gave to her thought, that in a little space
She for her Son in that same spot did cry
Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

XXIII.

O thou great God that dost perform thy laud
By mouths of Innocents, lo! here thy might;
This gem of chastity, this emerald,
And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,
There, where with mangled throat he lay upright
The *Alma Redemptoris* 'gan to sing,
So loud, that with his voice the place did ring.

XXIV.

The Christian folk that through the Jewry went
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;
And hastily they for the Provost sent;
Immediately he came, not tarrying,
And praiseth Christ that is our Heavenly King,
And eke his Mother, honor of Mankind:
Which done, he bade that they the Jews should bind.

XXV.

This Child with piteous lamentation then
Was taken up, singing his song alwày;
And with procession great and pomp of men
To the next Abbey him they bare away;
His Mother swooning by the body lay:
And scarcely could the people that were near
Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

XXVI.

Torment and shameful death to every one
This Provost doth for those bad Jews prepare
That of this murder wist, and that anon:
Such wickedness his judgments cannot spare;
Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;
Them therefore with wild horses did he draw,
And after that he hung them by the law.

XXVII.

Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie
Before the altar while the Mass doth last:
The Abbot with his convent's company
Then sped themselves to bury him full fast;
And, when they holy water on him cast,
Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was the water
And sang, *O Alma Redemptoris Mater!*

XXVIII.

This Abbot, for he was a holy man,
As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,
In supplication to the Child began,
Thus saying: 'O dear Child! I summon thee,
In virtue of the holy Trinity,
Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this hymn,
Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth seem.'

XXIX.

'My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,'
said this young Child, 'and by the law of kind,
I should have died, yea many hours ago,

But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,
Will that his glory last, and be in mind;
And, for the worship of his Mother dear,
Yet may I sing, *O Alma!* loud and clear.

XXX.

'This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother sweet,
After my knowledge I have lived alwày;
And in the hour when I my death did meet,
To me she came, and thus to me did say,
Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,"
As ye have heard; and soon as I had sung,
Methought she laid a grain upon my tongue.

XXXI.

'Wherefore I sing, nor can from song refrain,
In honor of that blissful Maiden free,
Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain.
And after that thus said she unto me:
"My little Child, then will I come for thee
Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they take
Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake!"'

XXXII.

This holy Monk, this Abbot, him mean I,
Touched then his tongue, and took away the grain
And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;
And, when the Abbot had this wonder seen,
His salt tears trickled down like showers of rain
And on his face he dropped upon the ground,
And still he lay as if he had been bound

XXXIII.

Eke the whole Convent on the pavement lay,
Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear;
And after that they rose, and took their way,
And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,
And in a tomb of precious marble clear
Inclosed his uncorrupted body sweet. —
Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet!

XXXIV.

Young Hew of Lincoln! in like sort laid low
By cursed Jews, — thing well and widely known,
For it was done a little while ago, —
Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry,
Weak, sinful folk, that God, with pitying eye,
In mercy would his mercy multiply
On us, for reverence of his Mother Mary!"

II.

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

I.

THE God of Love, — *ah benedicite!*
How mighty and how great a Lord is he!
For he of low hearts can make high, of high
He can make low, and unto death bring nigh;
And hard hearts he can make them kind and free.

II.

Within a little time, as hath been found,
He can make sick folk whole and fresh and sound:
Them who are whole in body and in mind,
He can make sick, — bind can he and unbind
All that he will have bound, or have unbound.

III.

To tell his might my wit may not suffice;
Foolish men he can make them out of wise; —
For he may do all that he will devise;
Loose livers he can make abate their vice,
And proud hearts can make tremble in a trice.

IV.

In brief, the whole of what he will, he may;
Against him dare not any wight say nay;
To humble or afflict whome'er he will,
To gladden or to grieve, he hath like skill;
But most his might he sheds on the eve of May.

V.

For every true heart, gentle heart and free,
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,
Now against May shall have some stirring, — whether
To joy, or be it to some mourning; never
At other time, methinks, in like degree.

VI.

For now when they may hear the small birds' song,
And see the budding leaves the branches throng,

This unto their remembrance doth bring
All kinds of pleasure mixed with sorrowing;
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever long.

VII.

And of that longing heaviness doth come,
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart and home;
Sick are they all for lack of their desire;
And thus in May their hearts are set on fire,
So that they burn forth in great martyrdom.

VIII.

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what though now
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;
Yet have I felt of sickness through the May,
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every day, —
How hard, alas! to bear, I only know.

IX.

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep
Through all this May, that I have little sleep;
And also 't is not likely unto me,
That any living heart should sleepy be
In which Love's dart its fiery point doth steep.

X.

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,
I of a token thought which Lovers heed;
How among them it was a common tale,
That it was good to hear the Nightingale
Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be utterèd.

XI.

And then I thought anon, as it was day,
I gladly would go somewhere to essay
If I perchance a Nightingale might hear;
For yet had I heard none, of all that year,
And it was then the third night of the May.

XII.

And soon as I a glimpse of day espied,
No longer would I in my bed abide,
But straightway to a wood that was hard by
Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,
And held the pathway down by a brook-side;

XIII.

Till to a lawn I came, all white and green,
I in so fair a one had never been.
The ground was green, with daisy powdered over
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty cover,
All green and white; and nothing else was seen.

XIV.

There sat I down among the fair, fresh flowers,
And saw the birds come tripping from their bowers,
Where they had rested them all night; and they
Who were so joyful at the light of day,
Began to honor May with all their powers.

XV.

Well did they know that service all by rote,
And there was many and many a lovely note,

Some, singing loud, as if they had complained;
Some with their notes another manner feigned;
And some did sing all out with the full throat.

XVI.

They pruned themselves, and made themselves
right gay,
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray;
And ever two and two together were,
The same as they had chosen for the year,
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day.

XVII.

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sat upon,
Was making such a noise as it ran on
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony;
Methought that it was the best melody
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

XVIII.

And for delight, but how I never wot,
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,
Broke silence, or I heard him in my thought.

XIX.

And that was right upon a tree fast by,
And who was then ill satisfied but I?
Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the rood,
From thee and thy base throat keep all that's good,
Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

XX.

And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan chide,
In the next bush that was me fast beside,
I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,
That her clear voice made a loud rioting,
Echoing through all the greenwood wide.

XXI.

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my heart's cheer
Hence hast thou stayed a little while too long;
For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,
And she hath been before thee with her song;
Evil light on her! she hath done me wrong.

XXII.

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I pray;
As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,
Methought I wist right well what these birds meant,
And had good knowing both of their intent,
And of their speech, and all that they would say.

XXIII.

The Nightingale thus in my hearing spake:—
Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or brake,
And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell here;
For every wight eschews thy song to hear.
Such uncouth singing verily dost thou make.

XXIV.

What! quoth she then, what is't that ails thee now
It seems to me I sing as well as thou;

For mine 's a song that is both true and plain,—
Although I cannot quaver so in vain
As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how.

XXV.

All men may understanding have of me,
But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee;
For thou hast many a foolish and quaint cry:—
Thou sayst OSEE, OSEE, then how may I
Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this may be

XXVI.

Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what it is?
Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,
Then mean I, that I should be wonderous fain
That shamefully they one and all were slain,
Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

XXVII.

And also would I that they all were dead,
Who do not think in love their life to lead;
For who is loth the God of Love to obey
Is only fit to die, I dare well say,
And for that cause OSEE I cry; take heed!

XXVIII.

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,
That all must love or die; but I withdraw,
And take my leave of all such company,
For my intent it neither is to die,
Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

XXIX.

For lovers, of all folk that be alive,
The most disquiet have, and least do thrive;
Most feeling have of sorrow, woe, and care,
And the least welfare cometh to their share;
What need is there against the truth to strive?

XXX

What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy mind,
That in thy churlishness a cause canst find
To speak of Love's true Servants in this mood;
For in this world no service is so good
To every wight that gentle is of kind.

XXXI.

For thereof comes all goodness and all worth;
All gentiless and honor thence come forth;
Thence worship comes, content, and true heart's
pleasure,
And full-assured trust, joy without measure,
And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth:

XXXII.

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,
And seemliness, and faithful company,
And dread of shame that will not do amiss;
For he that faithfully Love's servant is,
Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to die.

XXXIII

And that the very truth it is which I
Now say, — in such belief I 'll live and die:

And, Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice.
Then, quoth she, let me never hope for bliss,
If with that counsel I do e'er comply.

XXXIV.

Good Nightingale! thou speakest wondrous fair,
Yet, for all that, the truth is found elsewhere;
For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis,
And Love in old folk a great dotage is;
Who most it useth, him 't will most impair.

XXXV.

For thereof come all contraries to gladness;
Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming sadness,
Mistrust and jealousy, despite, debate,
Dishonor, shame, envy importunate,
Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and madness.

XXXVI.

Loving is aye an office of despair,
And one thing is therein which is not fair;
For whoso gets of love a little bliss,
Unless it always stay with him, I wis
He may full soon go with an old man's hair.

XXXVII.

And therefore, Nightingale! do thou keep nigh·
For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint cry,
If long time from thy mate thou be, or far,
Thou 'lt be as others that forsaken are;
Then shalt thou raise a clamor as do I.

XXXVIII.

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill beseen!
The God of Love afflict thee with all teen.
For thou art worse than mad a thousand-fold;
For many a one hath virtues manifold,
Who had been naught, if Love had never been.

XXXIX.

For evermore his servants Love amendeth,
And he from every blemish them defendeth;
And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,
In loyalty, and worshipful desire,
And, when it likes him, joy enough them sendeth

XL.

Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be still,
For Love no reason hath but his own will;—
For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy;
True lovers doth so bitterly annoy,
He lets them perish through that grievous ill.

XLI.

With such a master would I never be;*
For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not see,
And knows not when he hurts and when he heals
Within this court full seldom Truth avails,
So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

* From a manuscript in the Bodleian. There are also stanzas 44 and 45, which are necessary to complete the sense.

XLII.

Then of the Nightingale did I take note
How from her inmost heart a sigh she brought,
And said, Alas that ever I was born!
Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn;—
And with that word, she into tears burst out.

XLIII.

Alas, alas! my very heart will break,
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus speak
Of Love, and of his holy services;
Now, God of Love! thou help me in some wise,
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may wreak.

XLIV.

And so methought I started up anon,
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,
Which at the Cuckoo hardily I cast,
And he for dread did fly away full fast;
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was gone.

XLV.

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,
Kept crying, "Farewell! — farewell, Popinjay!"
As if in scornful mockery of me;
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

XLVI.

Then straightway came the Nightingale to me,
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank thee,

That thou wert near to rescue me; and now
Unto the God of Love I make a vow,
That all this May I will thy songstress be.

XLVII.

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou heard'st me
Yet if I live it shall amended be,
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

XLVIII.

And one thing will I counsel thee alsó:
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's saw;
All that he said is an outrageous lie.
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto, quoth I,
For Love, and it hath done me mighty woe.

XLIX.

Yea, hath it? use, quoth she, this medicine;
This May-time, every day before thou dine,
Go look on the fresh daisy; then say I,
Although for pain thou mayst be like to die,
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop and pine

L.

And mind always that thou be good and true,
And I will sing one song, of many new,
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry;
And then did she begin this song full high,
"Beshrew all them that are in 'ove untrue."

LI.

And soon as she had sung it to an end,
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must wend;
And, God of Love, that can right well and may,
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

LII.

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of me;
I pray to God with her always to be,
And joy of love to send her evermore;
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her lore,
For there is not so false a bird as she.

LIII.

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightingale,
To all the Birds that lodged within that dale,
And gathered each and all into one place,
And them besought to hear her doleful case;
And thus it was that she began her tale.

LIV

The Cuckoo, — 't is not well that I should hide
How she and I did each the other chide,
And without ceasing, since it was daylight;
And now I pray you all to do me right
Of that false Bird, whom Love cannot abide.

LV.

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all gave.
This matter asketh counsel good as grave,

For birds we are, — all here together brought;
And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is not;
And therefore we a Parliament will have.

LVI.

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,
And other Peers whose names are on record;
A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,
And judgment there be given; or, that intent
Failing, we finally shall make accord.

LVII.

And all this shall be done, without a nay,
The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,
Under a maple that is well beseen,
Before the chamber-window of the Queen,
At Woodstock, on the meadow green and gay.

LVIII.

She thankèd them; and then her leave she took,
And flew into a hawthorn by that brook;
And there she sat and sung, upon that tree,
"For term of life Love shall have hold of me,"—
So loudly, that I with that song awoke.

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,
For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,
Who did on thee the hardiness bestow
To appear before my Lady? but a sense
Thou surely hast of her benevolence,

Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth give;
For of all good she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book! for thy unworthiness,
To show to her some pleasant meanings writ
In winning words, since through her gentiless,
Thee she accepts as for her service fit!
Oh! it repents me I have neither wit
Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give;
For of all good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness,
Though I be far from her I reverence,
To think upon my truth and stedfastness,
And to abridge my sorrow's violence,
Caused by the wish, as knows your sapience,
She of her liking proof to me would give;
For of all good she is the best alive.

L'ENVOY.

Pleasure's Aurora, Day of gladsomeness!
Luna by night, with heavenly influence
Illumined! root of beauty and goodnesse,
Write, and allay, by your beneficence,
My sighs breathed forth in silence, — comfort give!
Since of all good you are the best alive.

EXPLICIT.

III.

TROILUS AND CRESIDA.

Next morning Troilus began to clear
His eyes from sleep, at the first break of day,
And unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,
For love of God, full piteously did say,
We must the Palace see of Cresida;
For since we yet may have no other feast,
Let us behold her Palace at the least!

And therewithal to cover his intent,
A cause he found into the Town to go,
And they right forth to Cresid's Palace went;
But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,
Him thought his sorrowful heart would break in two;
For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,
Wellnigh for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover 'gan behold
How shut was every window of the place,
Like frost he thought his heart was icy cold;
For which, with changèd, pale, and deadly face,
Without word uttered, forth he 'gan to pace;
And on his purpose bent so fast to ride,
That no wight his continuance espied.

Then said he thus: O Palace desolate!
O house of houses, once so richly dight!

O Palace empty and disconsolate!
Thou lamp of which extinguished is the light!
O Palace whilom day that now art night!
Thou ought'st to fall and I to die; since she
Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O of all houses once the crownèd boast!
Palace illumined with the sun of bliss!
O ring of which the ruby now is lost!
O cause of woe, that cause has been of bliss!
Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss
Thy cold doors; but I dare not for this rout;
Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint is out!

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,
With changèd face, and piteous to behold;
And when he might his time aright espy,
Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told
Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,
So piteously, and with so dead a hue,
That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and down,
And everything to his rememberànce
Came, as he rode by places of the town
Where he had felt such perfect pleasure once.
Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,
And in that Temple she with her bright eyes,
My Lady dear, first bound me captive-wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I
Heard my own Cresid's laugh; and once at play
I yonder saw her eke full blissfully;
And yonder once she unto me 'gan say,
Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I pray!
And there so graciously did me behold,
That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that selfsame house
Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,
So womanly, with voice melodious
Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,
That in my soul methinks I yet do hear
The blissful sound; and in that very place
My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love! then thus he cried,
When I the process have in memory,
How thou hast wearied me on every side,
Men thence a book might make, a history;
What need to seek a conquest over me,
Since I am wholly at thy will? what joy
Hast thou thy own liege subjects to destroy?

Dread Lord! so fearful when provoked, thine ire
Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain and grief;
Now mercy, Lord! thou know'st well I desire
Thy grace above all pleasures first and chief:
And live and die I will in thy belief;

For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,
That Cresida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,
As thou dost mine with longing her to see,
Then know I well that she would not sojourn.
Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be
Unto the blood of Troy, I pray to thee,
As Juno was unto the Theban blood,
From whence to Thebes came griefs in multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go
Whence Cresid rode, as if in haste she was;
And up and down there went, and to and fro,
And to himself full oft he said, Alas!
From hence my hope, and solace forth did pass.
O would the blissful God now for his joy,
I might her see again coming to Troy!

And up to yonder hill was I her guide;
Alas! and there I took of her my leave;
Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,
For very grief of which my heart shall cleave;—
And hither home I came when it was eve;
And here I dwell, an outcast from all joy,
And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,
That he was blighted, pale, and waxen less

Than he was wont; and that in whispers soft
Men said, What may it be, can no one guess
Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?
All which he of himself conceited wholly
Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head,
That every wight, who in the way passed by,
Had of him ruth, and fancied that they said,
I am right sorry Troilus will die:
And thus a day or two drove wearily;
As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to lead
As one that standeth betwixt hope and dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to show
The occasion of his woe, as best he might;
And made a fitting song, of words but few,
Somewhat his woful heart to make more light;
And when he was removed from all men's sight,
With a soft night voice, he of his Lady dear,
That absent was, 'gan sing, as ye may hear: —

O star, of which I lost have all the light,
With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,
That ever dark in torment, night by night,
Toward my death with wind I steer and sail;
For which upon the tenth night if thou fail
With thy bright beams to guide me but one hour,
My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung through,
He fell again into his sorrows old;
And every night, as was his wont to do,
Troilus stood the bright moon to behold;
And all his trouble to the moon he told,
And said: I wis, when thou art horned anew,
I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that morrow,
When hence did journey my bright Lady dear,
That cause is of my torment and my sorrow;
For which, O gentle Luna, bright and clear,
For love of God, run fast above thy sphere;
For when thy horns begin once more to spring,
Then shall she come, that with her bliss may bring.

The day is more, and longer every night,
Than they were wont to be, — for he thought so;
And that the sun did take his course not right,
By longer way than he was wont to go;
And said, I am in constant dread, I trow,
That Phaëton his son is yet alive,
His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,
To the end that he the Grecian host might see;
And ever thus he to himself would talk —
Lo! yonder is my own bright Lady free;
Or yonder is it that the tents must be;

And thence does come this air which is so sweet,
That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

And certainly this wind, that more and more
By moments thus increaseth in my face,
Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore;
I prove it thus: for in no other space
Of all this town, save only in this place,
Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain;
It saith, Alas! why severed are we twain?

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,
Till fully passed and gone was the ninth night;
And ever at his side stood Pandarus,
Who busily made use of all his might
To comfort him, and make his heart more light;
Giving him always hope, that she the morrow
Of the tenth day will come, and end his sorrow.

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE.

I.

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.

The class of Beggars, to which the old man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighborhood, and had certain fixed days on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I SAW an aged Beggar in my walk;
And he was seated, by the highway-side,
On a low structure of rude masonry
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
Who lead their horses down the steep, rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged man
Had placed his staff across a broad, smooth stone
That overlays the pile; and, from a bag
All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one;
And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
Of idle computation. In the sun,

Upon the second step of that small pile,
Surrounded by those wild, unpeopled hills,
He sat, and ate his food in solitude:
And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
Fell on the ground; and the small mountain birds,
Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
Approached within the length of half his staff.

Him from my childhood have I known; and then
He was so old, he seems not older now;
He travels on, a solitary man,
So helpless in appearance, that for him
The sauntering horseman throws not with a slack
And careless hand his alms upon the ground,
But stops, — that he may safely lodge the coin
Within the old man's hat; nor quits him so,
But still, when he has given his horse the rein,
Watches the aged Beggar with a look
Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who tends
The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees
The aged Beggar coming, quits her work,
And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.
The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake
The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
Shouts to him from behind; and if, thus warned,
The old man does not change his course, the boy
Turns with less noisy wheels to the road-side,

And passes gently by, without a curse
Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary man ;
His age has no companion. On the ground
His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,
They move along the ground ; and, evermore,
Instead of common and habitual sight
Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,
And the blue sky, one little span of earth
Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
Bow-bent, his eyes forever on the ground,
He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,
And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,
Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,
The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
Impressed on the white road, — in the same line,
At distance still the same. Poor Traveller !
His staff trails with him : scarcely do his feet
Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still
In look and motion, that the cottage curs,
Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,
Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,
And urchins newly breeched, — all pass him by :
Him even the slow-paced wagon leaves behind.

But deem not this man useless. Statesmen ! ye
Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
Who have a broom still ready in your hands

To rid the world of nuisances; ye proud,
Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye contemplate
Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
A burden of the earth! 'T is nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
Of forms created the most vile and brute,
The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good, — a spirit and pulse of good,
A life and soul, to every mood of being
Inseparably linked. Then be assured
That least of all can aught — that ever owned
The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
Which man is born to — sink, howe'er depressed,
So low as to be scorned without a sin;
Without offence to God, cast out of view;
Like the dried remnants of a garden-flower
Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
Worn out and worthless. While from door to door
This old man creeps, the villagers in him
Behold a record which together binds
Past deeds and offices of charity,
Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,
Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign
To selfishness and cold, oblivious cares.
Among the farms and solitary huts,
Hamlets and thinly scattered villages,
Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,
The mild necessity of use compels

To acts of love; and habit does the work
Of reason; yet prepares that after-joy
Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
Doth find herself insensibly disposed
To virtue and true goodness.
Some there are,
By their good works exalted, lofty minds
And meditative, authors of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time
Will live, and spread, and kindle: even such minds
In childhood, from this solitary Being,
Or from like wanderer, haply have received
(A thing more precious far than all that books
Or the solicitudes of love can do!)
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
In which they found their kindred with a world
Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
Who sits at his own door, and, like the pear
That overhangs his head from the green wall,
Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and young,
The prosperous and unthinking, they who live
Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
Of their own kindred; — all behold in him
A silent monitor, which on their minds
Must needs impress a transitory thought
Of self-congratulation, to the heart
Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
His charters and exemptions; and, perchance,
Though he to no one give the fortitude

And circumspection needful to preserve
His present blessings, and to husband up
The respite of the season, he at least,
And 't is no vulgar service, makes them felt.

Yet further. —— Many, I believe, there are,
Who live a life of virtuous decency,
Men who can hear the Decalogue, and feel
No self-reproach; who of the moral law
Established in the land where they abide
Are strict observers; and not negligent
In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
Their kindred, and the children of their blood.
Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace!
— But of the poor man ask, the abject poor;
Go, and demand of him, if there be here,
In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
And these inevitable charities,
Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?
No, — man is dear to man; the poorest poor
Long for some moments in a weary life
When they can know and feel that they have been,
Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out
Of some small blessings; have been kind to such
As needed kindness, for this single cause,
That we have all of us one human heart.
— Such pleasure is to one kind Being known,
My neighbor, when with punctual care, each week,
Duly as Friday comes, though pressed herself
By her own wants, she from her store of meal

Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
Returning with exhilarated heart,
Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
And while, in that vast solitude to which
The tide of things has borne him, he appears
To breathe and live but for himself alone,
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
The good which the benignant law of Heaven
Has hung around him: and, while life is his,
Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
To tender offices and pensive thoughts.
— Then let him pass, a blessing on his head!
And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
The freshness of the valleys; let his blood
Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;
And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath
Beat his gray locks against his withered face.
Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
Gives the last human interest to his heart.
May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,
Make him a captive! — for that pent-up din,
Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
Be his the natural silence of old age!
Let him be free of mountain solitudes;
And have around him, whether heard or not,
The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
Few are his pleasures: if his eyes have now
Been doomed so long to settle upon earth,

That not without some effort they behold
The countenance of the horizontal sun,
Rising or setting, let the light at least
Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down
Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank
Of highway-side, and with the little birds,
Share his chance-gathered meal; and, finally,
As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
So in the eye of Nature let him die!

1798.

II.

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE.

'T is not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,
The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,
And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town;
His staff is a sceptre, his gray hairs a crown;
And his bright eyes look brighter, set off by the streak
Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on his cheek.

Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn, — 'mid the joy
Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy

That countenance there fashioned, which, spite of a stain
That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A Farmer he was; and his house far and near
Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer:
How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale
Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his mild ale!

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
His fields seemed to know what their master was doing;
And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
All caught the infection, — as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl, —
The fields better suited the ease of his soul:
He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight, —
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought; and the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door:
He gave them the best that he had; or, to say
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm:
The Genius of Plenty preserved him from harm

At length, what to most is a season of sorrow,
His means are run out, — he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbors he went, — all were free with their money;
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey,
That they dreamt not of dearth; — he continued his rounds,
Knocked here, and knocked there, pounds still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserved for himself:
Then, (what is too true,) without hinting a word,
Turned his back on the country, — and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes! — but I guess that you frame
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the shame;
In him it was scarcely a business of art,
For this he did all in the *ease* of his heart.

To London — a sad emigration I ween —
With his gray hairs he went, from the brook and the green:
And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam assume, —
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom;
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green and is stout;
Twice as fast as before does his blood run about;
You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he 's not like an old man that leisurely goes
About work that he knows, in a track that he knows;
But often his mind is compelled to demur,
And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
Like one whose own country 's far over the sea;
And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue
Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What 's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats?
Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets;

With a look of such earnestness often will stand,
You might think he 'd twelve reapers at work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent Garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits and her flowers,
Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor Winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a wagon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a wagon, and smells at the hay;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair, —
If you pass by at morning, you 'll meet with him there.
The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam! when low thou art laid
May one blade of grass spring over thy head;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be,
Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

1803.

III.

THE SMALL CELANDINE.

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 't is out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distressed,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
And recognized it, though an altered form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly muttered voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gray.

To be a Prodigal's Favorite, — then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner, — behold our lot!
O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

1804.

IV.

THE TWO THIEVES;

OR, THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

O NOW that the genius of Bewick were mine,
And the skill which he learned on the banks of the Tyne!
Then the Muses might deal with me just as they chose,
For I'd take my last leave both of verse and of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical hand!
Book-learning and books should be banished the land:
And, for hunger and thirst and such troublesome calls,
Every ale-house should then have a feast on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes on a chair
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw would he care!

For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and his
Sheaves,
O, what would they be to my tale of Two Thieves?

The one, yet unbreeched, is not three birthdays old,
His Grandsire that age more than thirty times told;
There are ninety good seasons of fair and foul
weather
Between them, and both go a pilfering together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his floor?
Is a cart-load of turf at an old woman's door?
Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will slide!
And his Grandson 's as busy at work by his side.

Old Daniel begins; he stops short, — and his eye,
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning and sly:
'T is a look which at this time is hardly his own,
But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown

He once had a heart which was moved by the wires
Of manifold pleasures and many desires:
And what if he cherished his purse? 'T was no
more
Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'T was a path trod by thousands; but Daniel is one
Who went something farther than others have gone;
And now with old Daniel you see how it fares,
You see to what end he has brought his gray hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand: ere the sun
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun
And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,
This child but half knows it, and that not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread,
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or led;
And, wherever they carry their plots and their wiles,
Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy, they roam;
For the gray-headed Sire has a daughter at home,
Who will gladly repair all the damage that 's done;
And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

Old Man! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side:
Long yet mayst thou live! for a teacher we see
That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.

1800.

V.

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.

The little hedgerow birds,
That peck along the road, regard him not.
He travels on, and in his face, his step,

His gait, is one expression: every limb,
His look and bending figure, all bespeak
A man who does not move with pain, but moves
With thought. — He is insensibly subdued
To settled quiet: he is one by whom
All effort seems forgotten; one to whom
Long patience hath such mild composure given,
That patience now doth seem a thing of which
He hath no need. He is by nature led
To peace so perfect, that the young behold
With envy what the Old Man hardly feel.

1798.

EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

EPITAPHS

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA.

I.

WEEP not, beloved Friends! nor let the air
For me with sighs be troubled. Not from life
Have I been taken; this is genuine life
And this alone, — the life which now I live
In peace eternal; where desire and joy
Together move in fellowship without end.—
Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,
His tombstone thus should speak for him. And surely
Small cause there is for that fond wish of ours
Long to continue in this world; a world
That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a hope
To good, whereof itself is destitute.

II.

PERHAPS some needful service of the State
Drew TITUS from the depth of studious bowers,

And doomed him to contend in faithless courts,
Where gold determines between right and wrong.
Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,
And his pure native genius, lead him back
To wait upon the bright and gracious Muses,
Whom he had early loved. And not in vain
Such course he held! Bologna's learned schools
Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and hung
With fondness on those sweet Nestorian strains.
There pleasure crowned his days; and all his
thoughts
A roseate fragrance breathed.* — O human life,
That never art secure from dolorous change!
Behold a high injunction suddenly
To Arno's side hath brought him, and he charmed
A Tuscan audience: but full soon was called
To the perpetual silence of the grave.
Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood
A Champion steadfast and invincible,
To quell the rage of literary War!

O THOU who movest onward with a mind
Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste!
'T will be no fruitless moment. I was born
Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.

* Ivi vivea giocondo e i suoi pensieri
Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to his original.

On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate
To sacred studies; and the Roman Shepherd
Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.
Well did I watch, much labored, nor had power
To escape from many and strange indignities;
Was smitten by the great ones of the world,
But did not fall; for Virtue braves all shocks,
Upon herself resting immovably.
Me did a kindlier fortune then invite
To serve the glorious Henry, King of France,
And in his hands I saw a high reward
Stretched out for my acceptance, — but Death came.
Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how false
How treacherous to her promise, is the world;
And trust in God, — to whose eternal doom
Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

IV.

There never breathed a man who, when his life
Was closing, might not of that life relate
Toils long and hard. — The warrior will report
Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in the field,
And blast of trumpets. He who hath been doomed
To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,
Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,
Envy and heart-inquietude, derived
From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.

I, who on shipboard lived from earliest youth,
Could represent the countenance horrible
Of the vexed waters, and the indignant rage
Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years
Over the well-steered galleys did I rule:—
From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,
Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown;
And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and oft.
Of every cloud which in the heavens might stir
I knew the force; and hence the rough sea's pride
Availed not to my Vessel's overthrow.
What noble pomp and frequent have not I
On regal decks beheld! yet in the end
I learned that one poor moment can suffice
To equalize the lofty and the low.
We sail the sea of life, — a *Calm* one finds,
And one a *Tempest*, — and, the voyage o'er
Death is the quiet haven of us all.
If more of my condition ye would know,
Savona was my birthplace, and I sprang
Of noble parents: seventy years and three
Lived I, — then yielded to a slow disease.

V.

True is it that Ambrosio Salinero,
With an untoward fate, was long involved
In odious litigation; and full long,
Fate harder still! had he to endure assaults

Of racking malady. And true it is,
That not the less a frank, courageous heart
And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain;
And he was strong to follow in the steps
Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path
Leads to the dear Parnassian forest's shade,
That might from him be hidden; not a track
Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he
Had traced its windings. — This Savona knows,
Yet no sepulchral honors to her Son
She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled
Only by gold. And now a simple stone
Inscribed with this memorial here is raised
By his bereft, his lonely Chiabrera.
Think not, O Passenger who read'st the lines!
That an exceeding love hath dazzled me;
No, — he was one whose memory ought to spread
Where'er Permessus bears an honored name,
And live as long as its pure stream shall flow.

VI.

Destined to war from very infancy
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross:
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun
Hazard or toil; among the sands was seen
Of Lybia; and not seldom on the banks
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 't was my lot

To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.
So lived I, and repined not at such fate:
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,
That, stripped of arms, I to my end am brought
On the soft down of my paternal home.
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor halt
In thy appointed way, and bear in mind
How fleeting and how frail is human life!

VII.

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle blood,
And all that generous nurture breeds to make
Youth amiable! O friend so true of soul
To fair Aglaia! by what envy moved,
Lelius! has death cut short thy brilliant day
In its sweet opening? and what dire mishap
Has from Savona torn her best delight?
For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease to mourn,
And, should the outpourings of her eyes suffice not
For her heart's grief, she will entreat Sebeto
Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto,
Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to death,
In the chaste arms of thy belovèd Love!
What profit riches? what does youth avail?
Dust are our hopes; — I, weeping bitterly,
Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear to pray
That every gentle Spirit hither led
May read them not without some bitter tears.

VIII.

Not without heavy grief of heart did he
On whom the duty fell (for at that time
The father sojourned in a distant land)
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb
A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved!
Francesco was the name the Youth had borne,
Pozzobonnelli his illustrious house;
And when beneath this stone the Corse was laid,
The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.
Alas! the twentieth April of his life
Had scarcely flowered: and at this early time,
By genuine virtue he inspired a hope
That greatly cheered his country: to his kin
He promised comfort; and the flattering thoughts
His friends had in their fondness entertained,*
He suffered not to languish or decay.
Now is there not good reason to break forth
Into a passionate lament? — O Soul!
Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,
Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air;
And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,
An everlasting spring! in memory
Of that delightful fragrance which was once
From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

* In justice to the Author, I subjoin the original: —

——— e degli amici
Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

IX.

PAUSE, courteous Spirit! — Balbi supplicates
That thou, with no reluctant voice, for him
Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer
A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.
This to the dead by sacred right belongs;
All else is nothing. — Did occasion suit
To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb
Would ill suffice: for Plato's lore sublime,
And all the wisdom of the Stagirite,
Enriched and beautified his studious mind:
With Archimedes also he conversed
As with a chosen friend; nor did he leave
Those laureate wreaths ungathered which the Nymphs
Twine near their loved Permessus. — Finally,
Himself above each lower thought uplifting,
His ears he closed to listen to the songs
Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old;
And his Permessus found on Lebanon.
A blessed man! who of protracted days
Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep;
But truly did *he* live his life. Urbino,
Take pride in him! — O Passenger, farewell!

I.

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came
From nearest kindred, Vernon her new name;
She came, though meek of soul, in seemly pride
Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.
O dread reverse! if aught *be* so, which proves
That God will chasten whom he dearly loves.
Faith bore her up through pains in mercy given,
And troubles that were each a step to Heaven:
Two Babes were laid in earth before she died;
A third now slumbers at the Mother's side;
Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles afford
A trembling solace to her widowed Lord.

Reader! if to thy bosom cling the pain
Of recent sorrow combated in vain;
Or if thy cherished grief have failed to thwart
Time still intent on his insidious part,
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts asleep,
Pilfering regrets we would, but cannot, keep;
Bear with him, — judge *him* gently who makes known
His bitter loss by this memorial Stone;
And pray that in his faithful breast the grace
Of resignation find a hallowed place.

II.

Six months to six years added he remained
Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained:
O blessed Lord! whose mercy then removed
A Child whom every eye that looked on loved;
Support us, teach us calmly to resign
What we possessed, and now is wholly thine!

III.

CENOTAPH.

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fermor, whose remains are deposited in the church of Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the love of a brother for the deceased, commends this memorial to the care of his heirs and successors in the possession of this place.

By vain affections unenthralled,
Though resolute when duty called
To meet the world's broad eye,
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun
That ever feared the tempting sun,
Did Fermor live and die.

This Tablet, hallowed by her name,
One heart-relieving tear may claim;
But if the pensive gloom

Of fond regret be still thy choice,
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice
Of Jesus from her tomb!

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

IV.

EPITAPH

IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE, WESTMORELAND.

By playful smiles, (alas! too oft
A sad heart's sunshine,) by a soft
And gentle nature, and a free
Yet modest hand of charity,
Through life was Owen Lloyd endeared
To young and old; and how revered
Had been that pious spirit, a tide
Of humble mourners testified,
When, after pains dispensed to prove
The measure of God's chastening love,
Here, brought from far, his corse found rest,—
Fulfilment of his own request;—
Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he
Planted with such fond hope the tree,
Less for the love of stream and rock,
Dear as they were, than that his Flock,
When they no more their Pastor's voice
Could hear to guide them in their choice

Through good and evil, help might have,
Admonished, from his silent grave,
Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,
For peace on earth and bliss in heaven.

V.

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF ——.

1798.

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,
Not long your pastime to prevent;
I heard the blessing which to you
Our common Friend and Father sent.
I kissed his cheek before he died;
And when his breath was fled,
I raised, while kneeling by his side,
His hand: — it dropped like lead.
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all
That can be done, will never fall
Like his till they are dead.
By night or day, blow foul or fair,
Ne'er will the best of all your train
Play with the locks of his white hair,
Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours;
But he could see the woods and plains,

Could hear the wind and mark the showers
Come streaming down the streaming panes.
Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound
He rests a prisoner of the ground.
He loved the breathing air,
He loved the sun, but if it rise
Or set, to him where now he lies,
Brings not a moment's care.
Alas! what idle words; but take
The Dirge which, for our Master's sake
And yours, love prompted me to make.
The rhymes so homely in attire
With learned ears may ill agree,
But, chanted by your Orphan Choir,
Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE.

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old gray stone;
Thou Angler, by the silent flood;
And mourn when thou art all alone,
Thou Woodman, in the distant wood!

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum;
And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy!
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb.

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide
Who checked or turned thy headstrong youth,

As he before had sanctified
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
Give, when your thoughts are turned this way
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
With one accord our voices raise,
Let sorrow overcharged with pain
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
From ill we meet or good we miss,
May touches of his memory bring
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS AFTER.

Long time his pulse hath ceased to beat;
But benefits, his gift, we trace, —
Expressed in every eye we meet
Round this dear Vale, his native place.

To stately Hall and Cottage rude
Flowed from his life what still they hold,
Light pleasures, every day renewed,
And blessings half a century old.

O true of heart, of spirit gay,
Thy faults, where not already gone
From memory, prolong their stay
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss;
And what beyond this thought we crave
Comes in the promise from the Cross,
Shining upon thy happy grave.*

VI.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

* See, upon the subject of the three foregoing pieces, the Fountain, &c., in the fourth volume of the Author's Poems.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no sleep;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven; —
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine,
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made:
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 't is so no more;
I have submitted to a new control;
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the Friend,
If he had lived, of him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 't is a passionate Work! — yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That Hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 't is surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here. —
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

1805.

VII.

TO THE DAISY.

SWEET Flower! belike one day to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,
I welcome thee once more:
But he, who was on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in loving thee,
Although he loved more silently
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah! hopeful, hopeful was the day
When to that Ship he bent his way,
To govern and to guide:
His wish was gained: a little time
Would bring him back, in manhood's prime
And free for life, these hills to climb,
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight;
The May had then made all things green,

And, floating there, in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen,
His pride and his delight!

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought:
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers!
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

But hark the word! — the ship is gone; —
Returns from her long course; — anon
Sets sail; — in season due,
Once more on English earth they stand:
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel! — ghastly shock!
— At length delivered from the rock,
The deep she hath regained;
And through the stormy night they steer,
Laboring for life, in hope and fear,
To reach a safer shore, — how near,
Yet not to be attained!

"Silence!" the brave Commander cried;
To that calm word a shriek replied,

It was the last death-shriek.
— A few (my soul oft sees that sight)
Survive upon the tall mast's height;
But one dear remnant of the night, —
For him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath the moving sea
He lay in slumber quietly;
Unforced by wind or wave
To quit the ship for which he died,
(All claims of duty satisfied;)
And there they found him at her side,
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service! yet not vainly done
For this, if other end were none,
That he, who had been cast
Upon a way of life unmeet
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
Should find an undisturbed retreat
Near what he loved, at last —

The neighborhood of grove and field
To him a resting-place should yield,
A meek man and a brave!
The birds shall sing and ocean make
A mournful murmur for *his* sake;
And thou, sweet flower, shalt sleep and wake
Upon his senseless grave.

1805.

VIII.

ELEGIAC VERSES,

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH,

Commander of the E. I. Company's ship, the Earl of Abergavenny, in which he perished by a calamitous shipwreck, Feb 6th, 1805. Composed near the mountain track, that leads from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where it descends towards Patterdale.

1805.

I.

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo!
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow:
Lord of the air, he took his flight;
O, could he on that woful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment's space, to thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near!

II.

Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke, (but let that pang be still,)
When, rising from the rock at will,
I saw the bird depart.
And let me calmly bless the Power

That meets me in this unknown flower,
Affecting type of him I mourn!
With calmness suffer and believe,
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

III.

Here did we stop; and here looked round
While each into himself descends,
For that last thought of parting Friends
That is not to be found.
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
Our home and his, his heart's delight,
His quiet heart's selected home.
But time before him melts away,
And he hath feeling of a day
Of blessedness to come.

IV.

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
In sorrow, but for higher trust,
How miserably deep!
All vanished in a single word,
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard.
Sea,—ship,—drowned,—shipwreck,—so it came,
The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;
He who had been our living John
Was nothing but a name.

v.

That was indeed a parting! O.
Glad am I, glad that it is past!
For there were some on whom it cast
Unutterable woe.
But they as well as I have gains;—
From many a humble source, to pains
Like these, there comes a mild release;
Even here I feel it, even this Plant
Is in its beauty ministrant
To comfort and to peace.

vi.

He would have loved thy modest grace,
Meek Flower! To him I would have said,
"It grows upon its native bed
Beside our Parting-place;
There, cleaving to the ground, it lies,
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling a cushion green like moss;
But we will see it, joyful tide!
Some day, to see it in its pride,
The mountain we will cross."

vii.

—Brother and friend, if verse of mine
Have power to make thy virtues known,
Here let a monumental Stone
Stand, sacred as a Shrine;
And to the few who pass this way,

Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,
Long as these mighty rocks endure, —
O, do not thou too fondly brood,
Although deserving of all good,
On any earthly hope, however pure! *

IX.

SONNET.

Why should we weep or mourn, Angelic Boy,
For such thou wert ere from our sight removed,
Holy, and ever dutiful, — beloved
From day to day with never-ceasing joy,
And hopes as dear as could the heart employ
In aught to earth pertaining? Death has proved
His might, nor less his mercy, as behoved, —
Death, conscious that he only could destroy
The bodily frame. That beauty is laid low
To moulder in a far-off field of Rome;
But Heaven is now, blest Child, thy Spirit's home:
When such divine communion, which we know,
Is felt, thy Roman burial-place will be
Surely a sweet remembrancer of thee.

1847

* The plant alluded to is the Moss Campion (Silene acaulis of Linnæus). See note at the end of the volume. See, among the Poems on the "Naming of Places," No. VI.

X.

LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

Loud is the Vale! the Voice is up
With which she speaks when storms are gone,
A mighty unison of streams!
Of all her Voices, one!

Loud is the Vale; — this inland Depth
In peace is roaring like the Sea;
Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain depressed,
Importunate and heavy load! *
The Comforter hath found me here,
Upon this lonely road;

And many thousands now are sad, —
Wait the fulfilment of their fear;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss;

* Importuna e grave salma. MICHAEL ANGELO.

But when the great and good depart
What is it more than this, —

That man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return? —
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn?

1804.

XI.

INVOCATION TO THE EARTH.

FEBRUARY, 1816.

I.

"REST, rest, perturbèd Earth!
O rest, thou doleful Mother of Mankind!"
A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than the wind.
"From regions where no evil thing has birth
I come, — thy stains to wash away,
Thy cherished fetters to unbind,
And open thy sad eyes upon a milder day.
The Heavens are thronged with martyrs that have risen
From out thy noisome prison;
The penal caverns groan
With tens of thousands rent from off the tree
Of hopeful life, — by battle's whirlwind blown
Into the deserts of Eternity.
Unpitied havoc! Victims unlamented!

But not on high, where madness is resented,
And murder causes some sad tears to flow,
Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,
The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly augmented.

II.

"False Parent of mankind!
Obdurate, proud, and blind,
I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,
Thy lost, maternal heart to re-infuse!
Scattering this far-fetched moisture from my wings,
Upon the act a blessing I implore,
Of which the rivers in their secret springs,
The rivers stained so oft with human gore,
Are conscious; — may the like return no more!
May Discord, — for a Seraph's care
Shall be attended with a bolder prayer, —
May she, who once disturbed the seats of bliss
These mortal spheres above,
Be chained for ever to the black abyss!
And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and love,
And merciful desires, thy sanctity approve!"

The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,
And the pure vision closed in darkness infinite.

XII.

LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY OF THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EXCURSION," UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL.

To public notice, with reluctance strong,
Did I deliver this unfinished Song;
Yet for one happy issue; — and I look
With self-congratulation on the Book
Which pious, learned MURFITT saw and read; —
Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;
He conned the new-born Lay with grateful heart, —
Foreboding not how soon he must depart;
Unweeting that to him the joy was given
Which good men take with them from earth to heaven.

XIII.

ELEGIAC STANZAS.

(ADDRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE DEATH OF HIS SISTER-IN-LAW.)

1824.

O FOR a dirge! But why complain?
Ask rather a triumphal strain
When FERMOR'S race is run;

A garland of immortal boughs
To twine around the Christian's brows,
Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt;
No tears of passionate regret
Shall stain this votive lay;
Ill-worthy, Beaumont! were the grief
That flings itself on wild relief
When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,
For ever covetous to feel,
And impotent to bear!
Such once was hers, — to think and think
On severed love, and only sink
From anguish to despair!

But nature to its inmost part
Faith had refined; and to her heart
A peaceful cradle given:
Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend
So graciously? — that could descend,
Another's need to suit,
So promptly from her lofty throne? —
In works of love, in these alone,
How restless, how minute!

Pale was her hue; yet mortal cheek
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak
When aught had suffered wrong, —
When aught that breathes had felt a wound;
Such look the Oppressor might confound,
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs
From out the bitterness of things;
Her quiet is secure;
No thorns can pierce her tender feet,
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,
As climbing jasmine, pure, —

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,
Or lily heaving with the wave
That feeds it and defends;
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed
The mountain-top, or breathed the mist
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death!
Thou strikest, — absence perisheth,
Indifference is no more;
The future brightens on our sight;
For on the past hath fallen a light
That tempts us to adore.

XIV.

ELEGIAC MUSINGS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON HALL, THE SEAT OF THE LATE SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

In these grounds stands the Parish Church, wherein is a mural monument bearing an Inscription, which, in deference to the earnest request of the deceased, is confined to name dates, and these words: — "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord!"

With copious eulogy in prose or rhyme
Graven on the tomb, we struggle against Time,
Alas, how feebly! but our feelings rise
And still we struggle when a good man dies.
Such offering Beaumont dreaded and forbade,
A spirit meek in self-abasement clad.
Yet *here* at least, though few have numbered days
That shunned so modestly the light of praise,
His graceful manners, and the temperate ray
Of that arch fancy which would round him play,
Brightening a converse never known to swerve
From courtesy and delicate reserve;
That sense, the bland philosophy of life,
Which checked discussion ere it warmed to strife
Those rare accomplishments, and varied powers,
Might have their record among sylvan bowers.
Oh, fled for ever! vanished like a blast
That shook the leaves in myriads as it passed; —
Gone from this world of earth, air, sea, and sky,

From all its spirit-moving imagery,
Intensely studied with a painter's eye,
A poet's heart; and, for congenial view,
Portrayed with happiest pencil, not untrue
To common recognitions while the line
Flowed in a course of sympathy divine; —
Oh! severed, too abruptly, from delights
That all the seasons shared with equal rights; —
Rapt in the grace of undismantled age,
From soul-felt music, and the treasured page
Lit by that evening lamp which loved to shed
Its mellow lustre round thy honored head;
While Friends beheld thee give, with eye, voice, mien,
More than theatric force to Shakespeare's scene; —
If thou hast heard me, — if thy Spirit know
Aught of these bowers, and whence their pleasures flow;
If things in our remembrance held so dear,
And thoughts and projects fondly cherished here,
To thy exalted nature only seem
Time's vanities, light fragments of earth's dream, —
Rebuke us not! — The mandate is obeyed
That said, "Let praise be mute where I am laid"
The holier deprecation, given in trust
To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust;
Yet have we found how slowly genuine grief
From *silent* admiration wins relief.
Too long abashed, thy Name is like a rose
That doth "within itself its sweetness close"

A drooping daisy changed into a cup
In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut up.
Within these groves, where still are flitting by
Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a sigh,
Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,
When towers and temples fall, to speak of Thee
If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom
Recall not there the wisdom of the Tomb,
Green ivy, risen from out the cheerful earth,
Will fringe the lettered stone; and herbs spring forth,
Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain unbound,
Shall penetrate the heart without a wound;
While truth and love their purposes fulfil,
Commemorating genius, talent, skill,
That could not lie concealed where thou wert known;
Thy virtues *He* must judge, and He alone,
The God upon whose mercy they are thrown.

Nov., 1830.

XV.

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB.

To a good Man of most dear memory
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
From the great city where he first drew breath,
Was reared and taught; and humbly earned his bread,

To the strict labors of the merchant's desk
By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks
Tease, and the thought of time so spent depress,
His spirit, but the recompense was high;
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire;
Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air;
And when the precious hours of leisure came,
Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet
With books, or while he ranged the crowded streets
With a keen eye, and overflowing heart:
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,
And poured out truth in works by thoughtful love
Inspired, — works potent over smiles and tears.
And as round mountain-tops the lightning plays,
Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,
Humor and wild instinctive wit, and all
The vivid flashes of his spoken words.
From the most gentle creature nursed in fields
Had been derived the name he bore, — a name,
Wherever Christian altars have been raised,
Hallowed to meekness and to innocence;
And if in him meekness at times gave way,
Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,
Many and strange, that hung about his life,
Still, at the centre of his being, lodged
A soul by resignation sanctified:
And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
That innocence belongs not to our kind,
A power that never ceased to abide in him,

Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins
That she can cover, left not his exposed
To an unforgiving judgment from just Heaven.
O, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived!
* * * * *
From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart
Those simple lines flowed, with an earnest wish,
Though but a doubting hope, that they might serve
Fitly to guard the precious dust of him
Whose virtues called them forth. That aim is missed;
For much that truth most urgently required
Had from a faltering pen been asked in vain:
Yet, haply, on the printed page received,
The imperfect record, there, may stand unblamed
As long as verse of mine shall breathe the air
Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my Friend,
But more in show than truth; and from the fields
And from the mountains, to thy rural grave
Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er
Its green, untrodden turf, and blowing flowers;
And, taking up a voice, shall speak (though still
Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity
Which words less free presumed not even to touch
Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit lamp
From infancy, through manhood, to the last
Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour,
Burnt on with ever-strengthening light, enshrined
Within thy bosom.

"Wonderful" hath been
The love established between man and man,
"Passing the love of women"; and between
Man and his helpmate in fast wedlock joined
Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of love
Without whose blissful influence Paradise
Had been no Paradise; and earth were now
A waste where creatures bearing human form,
Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear,
Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide on;
And let him grieve who cannot choose but grieve
That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,
And her bright dower of clustering charities,
That, round his trunk and branches, might have
clung,
Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,
Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee
Was given (say rather thou of later birth
Wert given to her) a Sister, — 't is a word
Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,
The self-restraining, and the ever kind;
In whom thy reason and intelligent heart
Found — for all interests, hopes, and tender cares,
All softening, humanizing, hallowing powers,
Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought —
More than sufficient recompense!
Her love
(What weakness prompts the voice to tell it here?)
Was as the love of mothers; and when years,
Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called

The long protected to assume the part
Of a protector, the first filial tie
Was undissolved; and, in or out of sight,
Remained imperishably interwoven
With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting world,
Did they together testify of time
And season's difference, — a double tree
With two collateral stems sprung from one root;
Such were they, — such through life they *might*
have been
In union, in partition only such;
Otherwise wrought the will of the Most High;
Yet, through all visitations and all trials,
Still they were faithful; like two vessels launched
From the same beach, one ocean to explore,
With mutual help, and sailing — to their league
True, as inexorable winds, or bars
Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn
With thine, O silent and invisible Friend!
To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,
When, reunited, and by choice withdrawn
From miscellaneous converse, ye were taught
That the remembrance of foregone distress,
And the worse fear of future ill, (which oft
Doth hang around it, as a sickly child
Upon its mother,) may be both alike
Disarmed of power to unsettle present good,
So prized, and things inward and outward held

In such an even balance, that the heart
Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy feels,
And in its depth of gratitude is still.

O gift divine of quiet sequestration!
The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,
And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,
Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves
To life-long singleness; but happier far
Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of others,
A thousand times more beautiful appeared,
Your *dual* loneliness. The sacred tie
Is broken; yet why grieve? for Time but holds
His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead
To the blest world where parting is unknown.

1835.

XVI.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG.

When first, descending from the moorlands,
I saw the stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
Through groves that had begun to shed

Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes;

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt one, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,
Like London with its own black wreath,

On which, with thee, O Crabbe! forth-looking,
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
Thou too art gone before; but why,
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;
For her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,
For slaughtered youth or love-lorn maid!
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet dead.*

Nov., 1835.

XVII.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITE CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF KESWICK.

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither drew
The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on you,
His eyes have closed! And ye, loved books, no more

* See Note.

Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their renown
Adding immortal labors of his own, —
Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal
For the State's guidance, or the Church's weal,
Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,
Informed his pen, or wisdom of the heart,
Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's mind
By reverence for the rights of all mankind.
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast
Could private feelings meet for holier rest.
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a cloud
From Skiddaw's top; but he to heaven was vowed
Through his industrious life, and Christian faith
Calmed in his soul the fear of change and death.

ODE.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.
See Vol. I. p. 187.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore; —
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose;
The Moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy!

IV.

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel, I feel it all.
O evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm: —
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there 's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life.

Shaped by himself with newly-learned art,
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind, —
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,

A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX.

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature

Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright

Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which, having been, must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

NOTES.

Page 36.

" The Horn of Egremont Castle."

This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor.

Page 56.

" The Russian Fugitive."

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth.

The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged wife of Peter the Great.

Page 126.

" The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale."

With this picture, which was taken from real life, compare the imaginative one of " The Reverie of Poor Susan," Vol. II., p. 132; and see (to make up the deficiencies of this class) " The Excursion," passim.

Page 159.

" Moss Campion (Silene acaulis)."

This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland

The first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the turf or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionably thick. I have only met with it in two places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I caution them against carrying off, inconsiderately, rare and beautiful plants. This has often been done, particularly from Ingleborough and other mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have totally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers of nature living near the places where they grew.

Page 169.

"*From the most gentle creature nursed in fields.*"

This way of indicating the *name* of my lamented friend has been found fault with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say in justification of the double sense of the word, that similar allusions are not uncommon in epitaphs. One of the best in our language in verse, I ever read, was upon a person who bore the name of Palmer; and the course of the thought, throughout, turned upon the Life of the Departed, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor can I think that the objection in the present case will have much force with any one who remembers Charles Lamb's beautiful sonnet addressed to his own name, and ending,

"No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!"

Page 175.

Walter Scott . . .	died 21st Sept., 1832.
S. T. Coleridge . . .	" 25th July, 1834.
Charles Lamb . . .	" 27th Dec., 1834.
George Crabbe . . .	" 3d Feb., 1832.
Felicia Hemans . . .	" 16th May, 1835.

APPENDIX, PREFACES.

ETC., ETC

Much the greatest part of the foregoing Poems has been so long before the Public that no prefatory matter, explanatory of any portion of them, or of the arrangement which has been adopted, appears to be required; and had it not been for the observations contained in those Prefaces upon the principles of Poetry in general, they would not have been reprinted even as an Appendix in this Edition.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF THE FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL VOLUME, UNDER THE TITLE OF "LYRICAL BALLADS."

Note.—In succeeding Editions, when the Collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes, as having little of a special application to their contents.

THE first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use, to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavor to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure; and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The

result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

. . . . .

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief, that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality, and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined, without pointing out in what manner language

and the human mind act and react on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed, that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author, in the present day, makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted

They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonorable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavoring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and, further, and above all to make these incidents and

situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted, (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust,) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a lan-

guage, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation.*

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonorable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend, at the same time, that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feel-

* It is worth while here to observe, that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

ings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced, that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the

popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting, that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavor to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity o their occupations produces a craving for extraor

linary incident, which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse. When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavor made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonorable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief, that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed, by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader

will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes; and are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavored utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart, is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the

style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavored to look steadily at my subject; consequently, there is, I hope, in these Poems, little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the

Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him, that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain."

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of his Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious, that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted, that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry * sheds no tears "such as Angels weep,"

* I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry

but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of

and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis, because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendor of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect, if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the Reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labor is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded, that, whatever be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and

carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure; and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, What is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him? — He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly

resemble the passions produced by real events, than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves: — whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious, that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to

him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle, the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavors occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as

indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontiniac, or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing. It is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not

formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure, he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and reacting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this

complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies, in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labor and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, sing-

ing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs, — in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed, — the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favorite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge, — it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labors of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, car

tying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man. — It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavor to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry in general; but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorize the conclusion, that there are few persons of good sense, who would not allow

that the dramatic parts of composition are defective, in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are colored by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine

with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the dis-

tinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit, because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion, but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which coexists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me, to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to super

add to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered, that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colors of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly underrate the power of metre in itself, it might perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and what I wished *chiefly* to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of Poetry is to produce excitement in coexistence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that

is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless; yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and I hope, if the following Poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of the distressful parts of Clarissa Harlowe, or the Gamester; while Shakespeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure, — an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular, impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement. — On the other hand, (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen,) if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious) in the feelings of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly

contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from

emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely, — all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most im

portant use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that is *necessary* to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that, of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavored to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my

language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt, that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an Author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the critic ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and perhaps in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they

are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the Reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to Poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen: —

> "I put my hat upon my head
> And walked into the Strand,
> And there I met another man
> Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly admired stanzas of the *Babes in the Wood.*

> "These pretty Babes with hand in hand
> Went wandering up and down;
> But never more they saw the Man
> Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlative contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from

the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound, unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that, on other occasions where we have been displeased, he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself, (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself,) but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that in many cases it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially

different from that which I have here endeavored to recommend: for the Reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect, that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honorable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them: we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow, that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But, would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of

the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming, that, if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced, which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained; and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining: and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

APPENDIX.

See page 214, — "by what is usually called POETIC DICTION."

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal without which, confined, as I have been, to the narrow limits of a preface, my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase Poetic Diction has been used; and for this purpose a few words shall here be added, concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest Poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, Poets, and men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech and made use of them, some-

times with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and thoughts with which they had no natural connection whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The Reader or Hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind: when affected by the genuine language of passion, he had been in a perturbed and unusual state of mind also: in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same, or similar causes. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language was received with admiration; and Poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion, carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterized by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true, that the language of the earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions; but it was really spoken by men, language which the Poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of Poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard the poems of these earliest Poets felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed: under the protection of this feeling, succeeding Poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation; that it was unusual. But the first Poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors: they found that they could please by easier means: they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which were uttered only by themselves. In process of time metre became

a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven, until the taste of men becoming gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language; and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the Reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the Reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is *balked* of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray, in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction*, than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's "Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue," &c., &c. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," &c., &c. 1st Corinthians, chap. xiii. By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr. Johnson: —

"Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,
Observe her labors, Sluggard, and be wise;
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away
To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day;
When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.
How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,
Unnerve thy vigor, and enchain thy powers?
While artful shades thy downy couch inclose,
And soft solicitation courts repose,
Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
Year chases year with unremitted flight,

Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,
Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambushed foe."

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. "Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Proverbs, chap. vi.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk:—

"Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared.

"Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial, endearing report
Of a land I must visit no more.
My Friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see."

This passage is quoted as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed; some Critics would call the language prosaic; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet "church-going" applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which Poets have introduced into their language, till they and their Readers take them as matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines "Ne'er sighed at the sound," &c., are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and, from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few Readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed: it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the Reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief guide in all I have said, — namely, that in works *of imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable.

whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.

ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE.

With the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage; or it relaxes of itself; — the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation; while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to Poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many, who, having been enamored of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which Poetry has continued to be comprehended *as a study*.

Into the above classes the Readers of Poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them all; but

from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with Poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of Poetry, (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science,) her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear;* not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses*, and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged obligation prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason! — When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts, is ever at hand to justify

extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or if these errors always terminated of themselves in due season. But with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are at the same time modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause, — that, having discontinued their attention to Poetry, whatever progress may have been

made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher Poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination

Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable, (confining these observations to the effects of style merely,) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the coloring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (i. e. obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But, as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive, that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or

moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to overrate the Authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they receive from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathize with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book. — To these excesses, they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled as they are and must be, with inward

misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious; — and at all seasons they are under temptation to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity; — the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence, and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an "imperfect shadowing forth" of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burden upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between Religion and Poetry; between Religion, making up the deficiencies of reason by faith, — and Poetry, passionate for the instruction of reason; between Religion, whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions, — and Poetry ethereal and transcendent, yet in-

capable to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error; — so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion, than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb: for a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties, capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it? Among those, and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed, that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which

are trustworthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mistaught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this class are contained censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalize rightly to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far, being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; — men who take upon them to report of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany, — confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily "into the region"; — men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives; — judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been

made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits, must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of Poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: it will be further found, that when Authors shall have at length raised themselves into general admiration, and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore, if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigor to the enemies whom it provokes; — a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical

literature of this country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that now reads the "Creation" of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the Faery Queene faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

> "The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors
> And poets *sage*," —

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy: while its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power, and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakespeare was listened to. The people were delighted: but I am not sufficiently

versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakespeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakespeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be

inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him.* His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakespeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: "the English, with their bouffon de Shakespeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian Critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with

* The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1635), writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Bartas, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakespeare.

our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakespeare. The Germans only of foreign nations are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say an established opinion, that Shakespeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be "a wild, irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakespeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human nature?

There is extant a small volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakespeare expresses his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured

to talk of an * act of Parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them: and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions, — "there sitting where he durst not soar."

Nine years before the death of Shakespeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small Poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these Poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide: nor would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation

* This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakespeare's Sonnets, see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakespeare.

About the time when the Pindaric Odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled Metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the Paradise Lost made its appearance. "Fit audience find, though few," was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were "*just* to it" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But be it remembered, that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured

him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the Poem as a religious work, and but few I fear would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not immediately increase; "for," says Dr. Johnson, "many more readers" (he means persons in the habit of reading poetry) "than were supplied at first, the Nation did not afford." How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's Poems, fourth edition, 1686; Waller, fifth edition, same date. The Poems of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know; but I well remember, that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man; but merely to show that, if Milton's work were not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of the Paradise Lost were printed in a shape which allowed

them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies of the Work were sold in eleven years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the Works of Shakespeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies; facts adduced by the critic to prove the "paucity of Readers." — There were readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm, that the reception of the Paradise Lost, and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired, that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous.* — How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the Miscellanies or trading Journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, everywhere impregnated with *original* excellence.

So strange indeed are the obliquities of admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that

* Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus: "It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful edition of Paradise Lost that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed."

there are no fixed principles* in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honored by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the Work of an English Peer of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are, throughout, equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularizes only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his lifetime, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of those arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature,

* This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

to which, if he had not been seduced by an overlove of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his Eclogues, with boyish inexperience, the praise which these compositions obtained tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in Pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those Eclogues which their author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "of reality and truth became conspicuous, even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded." The Pastorals, ludicrous to such as prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, "became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations."

Something less than sixty years after the publication of the Paradise Lost appeared Thomson's Winter; which was speedily followed by his other Seasons. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? "It was no sooner read," says one

of his contemporary biographers, "than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel or to look for anything in poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender, benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us: but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking

to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchilsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the Paradise Lost and the Seasons does not contain a single new image of external nature; and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the Iliad. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless; * those of Pope,

* CORTES *alone in a night-gown.*

All things are hushed as Nature's self lay dead;
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.
The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew sweat:
Even Lust and Envy sleep; yet Love denies
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

DRYDEN'S *Indian Emperor.*

though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation, -- nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity! -- If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature were not at that time holden in much estimation and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of the Seasons, the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the profi-

ciency of his pupils, but he could do little *more*; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognized a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment, how is the rest to be accounted for? — Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his Poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental commonplaces, that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of the Seasons the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts, and are the parts of his Work, which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him "an elegant and philosophical Poet"; nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson's genius as an imaginative

poet* were perceived, till the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of the Seasons, pointed them out by a note in his Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope. In the Castle of Indolence (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious and diction more pure. Yet that fine Poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a few.

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet's remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his lifetime was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the

* Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his Seasons, and find that even *that* does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration: these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the Seasons of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry; collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales that appeared not long after its publication; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr. Johnson, 'mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating, or imitating, these Reliques, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, Poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labors from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the

regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact * with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave, in my hearing, a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

> Now daye was gone, and night was come,
> And all were fast asleepe,

* Shenstone, in his Schoolmistress, gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance, (see D'Israeli's 2d Series of the Curiosities of Literature,) the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions, the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon himself.

All save the Lady Emeline,
Who sate in her bowre to weepe:

And soone she heard her true Love's voice
Low whispering at the walle,
Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,
'T is I thy true-love call.

Which is thus tricked out and dilated:

Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal
Vermummt in Rabenschatten,
Und Hochburgs Lampen überall
Schon ausgeflimmert hatten,
Und alles tief entschlafen war;
Doch nur das Fräulein immerdar,
Voll Fieberangst, noch wachte,
Und seinen Ritter dachte:
Da horch! Ein süsser Liebeston
Kam leis' empor geflogen.
"Ho, Trudchen, ho! Da bin ich schon!
Frisch auf! Dich angezogen!"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition,—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the "Reliques" had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labors were considerable! how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinter

ested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance! — Open this far-famed Book! — I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "Epic Poem Temora," in eight Books, presents itself. "The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Gray torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds." Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian!

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion. — Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In Nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Mac-

pherson's work, it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened, — yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied, when, with the steeps of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes; — of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface. — Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his "*ands*" and his "*buts*"! and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine

feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poems are derived from the ancient Fingallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own. — It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendor, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland; — a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns! These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as those pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly uninfluential upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them, — except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems*, — counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability

to amalgamate with the literature of the Island, is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless. — Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the Reliques of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions! — I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labors of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces biographical and critical for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent, from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits, which, from the sale of his works, each had brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a

limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley! — What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honored Chaucer? where is Spenser? where Sidney? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have vindicated, — where Shakespeare? — These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt, — Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates, — metrical writers utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect

to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these volumes? — The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these poems were first published, seventeen years ago; who has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been colored by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind from which they have proceeded, and the labor and pains which, when labor and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general im-

pression, though widely different in value; — they are all proofs that for the present time I have not labored in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this, — that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose Poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them, — and much he will have in common; but for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road, — he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labor for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the pride that induces him to dwell upon

those points wherein men differ from each other, to the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanized, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does *not* lie here. — TASTE, I would remind the reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive, — to intellectual *acts* and *operations*. The word Imagination has been overstrained, from impulses honorable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of apathy, — which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, make

them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word Imagination; but the word Taste has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which taste may be trusted; it is competent to this office; — for in its intercourse with these the mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination, — or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and the sublime, — are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor, *Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a coöperating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering;* but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strik-

ingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact, that, in popular language, to be in a passion, is to be angry! — But

> "Anger in hasty *words* or *blows*
> Itself discharges on its foes."

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid, and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer, at his first appearance in the world. — Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honor, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised or the employment of them in such a manner as to

produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this, but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general, stretched on his palanquin, and borne by his slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore, to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And doubtless in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence, which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others that are complex and revolutionary; some to which the heart yields with gentleness, others against which it struggles with pride; these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected, is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius

of the poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself, but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime, — if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity, in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word *popular*, applied to new works in poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions, as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell! — The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused without

the trouble of thought But in everything which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power, — wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination, —wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest future, — *there* the poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers. — Grand thoughts, (and Shakespeare must often have sighed over this truth,) as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits, without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing, that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage at-

tends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes;* the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty, — with adaptation, more or less skilful, to the changing humors of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole, that, in the opinion of the writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said above, that, of *good* poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? What preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

> "Past and Future are the wings
> On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,
> Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge."
> *MS.*

The voice that issues from this Spirit is that Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry,—transitory though it be for years

local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is anything of divine infallibility in the clamor of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the PUBLIC, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the PEOPLE. Towards the Public, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to: but to the People, philosophically characterized, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them, that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the "Vision and the Faculty divine," and that, both in words and things, they will operate, in their degree, to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honor, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction; — from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been.

1815.

DEDICATION.

PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

TO

SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT, BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE, —

Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these volumes to you. In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honor, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection, — as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim, — for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were born in that neighborhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu

and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood. — Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or colored by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself, — to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received from your pencil,* may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honor to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately and faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
February 1, 1815.

* The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815.

THE powers requisite for the production of poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description, — i. e. the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer; whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2dly, Sensibility, — which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as reacted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in

the original Preface.) 3dly, Reflection, — which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy, — to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention, — by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions, which the Poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment, — to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater; nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogate, to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.*

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative, — including the Epopœia, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Ro-

* As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendants upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said upon those requisites.

mance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighborhood, that dear production of our days, the Metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which everything primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse, "Arma virumque *cano*"; but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value; the Iliad or the Paradise Lost would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale; — so that of the whole it may be affirmed that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2dly, The Dramatic, — consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the Poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though, depending, to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of

monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3dly, The Lyrical, — containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,— descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the Seasons of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone's Schoolmistress, The Cotter's Saturday Night of Burns, The Twa Dogs of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton, Beattie's Minstrel, Goldsmith's Deserted Village. The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic, — the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the Georgics of Virgil, The Fleece of Dyer, Mason's English Garden, &c.

And, lastly, Philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's Night

Thoughts, and Cowper's Task, are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind *predominant* in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was, that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a twofold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, anything material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting Reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in

each class to prevent this; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But, as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the Reader, that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the production of them; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of Imagination, and *vice versâ*. Both the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems founded on the Affections"; as might this latter from those, and from the class "proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

None of the other classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre: with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make

such a large demand upon the Reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and therefore cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible, — the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification, — as to deprive the Reader of all voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem; — in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the true Poet does not therefore abandon his privilege distinct from that of the mere Proseman: —

> "He murmurs near the running brooks
> A music sweeter than their own."

Let us come now to the consideration of the words Fancy and Imagination, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. "A man," says an intelligent author, "has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which

images within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*φαντάζειν* is to cause to appear) so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterized. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations produced." — *British Synonymes discriminated, by W. Taylor.*

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation, as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other instances throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them: each

is nothing more than a mode of memory. It the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the Poet is "all compact," — he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape? or what is left to characterize Fancy, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity? — Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak or by his claws; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the Shepherd, thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats: —

> "Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro
> Dumosa *pendere* procul de rupe videbo."
>
> ——— "half-way down
> *Hangs* one who gathers samphire,"

is the well-known expression of Shakespeare, de-

lineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate Imagination, in the use of one word: neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

> "As when far off at sea a fleet descried
> *Hangs* in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
> Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
> Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring
> Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood
> Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
> Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole: so seemed
> Far off the flying Fiend."

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image: First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those

of sound; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes: —

"Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove *broods*";

of the same bird,

"His voice was *buried* among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze";

"O Cuckoo! shall I call thee *Bird*,
Or but a wandering *Voice*?"

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous process of incubation. "His voice was buried among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked; and characterizing its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shades in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

'Shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?"

This concise interrogation characterizes the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to react upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image, to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of

the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

> "As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
> Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
> Wonder to all who do the same espy
> By what means it could thither come, and whence,
> So that it seems a thing endued with sense,
> Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf
> Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun himself.
>
> "Such seemed this Man; not all alive or dead,
> Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.
> . . . . .
> Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
> That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
> And moveth altogether if it move at all."

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite

and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power: but the Imagination also shapes and *creates;* and how? By innumerable processes; and in none does it more delight, than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number, — alternations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one Person, has been introduced "sailing from Bengala." "They," i. e. the "merchants," representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, "ply" their voyage towards the extremities of the earth: "so" (referring to the word "As" in the commencement) "seemed the flying Fiend"; the image of his Person acting to recombine the multitude of ships into one body, — the point from which the comparison set out. "So seemed," and to whom seemed? To the heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet's mind, and to that of the Reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

"Modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis."

Hear again this mighty Poet, — speaking of the

Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels: —

> "Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints
> He onward came: far off his coming shone," —

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendor of that indefinite abstraction, "his coming"!

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the Reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions: I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, "draws all things to one; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one color and serve to one effect." * The grand storehouse of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton; to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to

* Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphitism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life and from the constitution of his mind. However imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create persons out of abstractions; and at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations, — of which his character of Una is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the words of Shakespeare are an inexhaustible source.

> "I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness;
> I never gave you kingdoms, called you Daughters!"

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention, yet justified by recollection of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous have heaped upon these and my

other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given, in these unfavorable times, evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterized as the power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, "the aggregate and associative power," my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different; or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be susceptible of change in their constitution, from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these, are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from everything but the plastic, the pliant

and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

> "In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
> On the fore-finger of an alderman."

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as Pompey's Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits, or twelve hundred cubits, high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas; because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded. The expression is, "His stature reached the sky!" the illimitable firmament! — When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived, grows — and continues to grow — upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature, than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding, than upon inherent and internal, properties: moreover, the images invariably modify each other. — The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that

their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtilty and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is conscious of an indestructible dominion; — the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished. — Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal. — Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalship with Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's Works can be opened that shall not afford examples. — Referring the Reader to those inestimable volumes. I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed

to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the Paradise Lost: —

> "The dews of the evening most carefully shun,
> They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathizing Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence: —

> "Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
> Wept at completion of the mortal sin."

The associating link is the same in each instance: Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise, is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous, that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as "Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan."

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteris-

tics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as "a palsied king," and yet a military monarch, — advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fanciful* comparisons, which indicate on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a corresponding hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

> "a magazine
> Of sovereign juice is cellared in;
> Liquor that will the siege maintain,
> Should Phœbus ne'er return again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling, than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

> 'T is that, that gives the poet rage,
> And thaws the gellied blood of age;
> Matures the young, restores the old,
> And makes the fainting coward bold.
>
> "It lays the careful head to rest,
> Calms palpitations in the breast,
> Renders our lives' misfortune sweet;
> . . . . .

"Then let the chill Sirocco blow,
And gird us round with hills of snow,
Or else go whistle to the shore,
And make the hollow mountains roar,

"Whilst we together jovial sit
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit,
Where, though bleak winds confine us home
Our fancies round the world shall roam.

'We 'll think of all the Friends we know,
And drink to all worth drinking to;
When having drunk all thine and mine,
We rather shall want healths than wine.

"But where Friends fail us, we 'll supply
Our friendships with our charity;
Men that remote in sorrows live,
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.

"We 'll drink the wanting into wealth,
And those that languish into health,
The afflicted into joy; the oppress
Into security and rest.

'The worthy in disgrace shall find
Favor return again more kind,
And in restraint who stifled lie,
Shall taste the air of liberty.

'The brave shall triumph in success,
The lover shall have mistresses,
Poor, unregarded Virtue, praise,
And the neglected Poet, bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good
Whilst we ourselves do all we would;
For, freed from envy and from care,
What would we be but what we are?"

When I sat down to write this Preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologize for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

POSTSCRIPT.

1835.

In the present volume, as in those that have preceded it, the reader will have found occasionally opinions expressed upon the course of public affairs, and feelings giving vent to as national interests excited them. Since nothing, I trust, has been uttered but in the spirit of reflective patriotism, those notices are left to produce their own effect; but, among the many objects of general concern, and the changes going forward, which I have glanced at in verse, are some especially affecting the lower orders of society: in reference to these, I wish here to add a few words in plain prose.

Were I conscious of being able to do justice to those important topics, I might avail myself of the periodical press for offering anonymously my thoughts, such as they are, to the world; but I feel that, in procuring attention, they may derive some advantage, however small, from my name, in addition to that of being presented in a less fugitive shape. It is also not impossible that the

state of mind which some of the foregoing poems may have produced in the reader will dispose him to receive more readily the impression which I desire to make, and to admit the conclusions I would establish.

1. The first thing that presses upon my attention is the Poor-Law Amendment Act. I am aware of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and the unwearied attention which it has received from men of far wider experience than my own; yet I cannot forbear touching upon one point of it, and to this I will confine myself, though not insensible to the objection which may reasonably be brought against treating a portion of this, or any other great scheme of civil polity, separately from the whole. The point to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is, that *all* persons who cannot find employment, or procure wages sufficient to support the body in health and strength, are entitled to a maintenance by law.

This dictate of humanity is acknowledged in the Report of the Commissioners: but is there not room for apprehension that some of the regulations of the new act have a tendency to render the principle nugatory by difficulties thrown in the way of applying it? If this be so, persons will not be wanting to show it, by examining the provisions of the act in detail, — an attempt which would be quite out of place here; but it will not, therefore, be deemed unbecoming in one who

fears that the prudence of the head may, in framing some of those provisions, have supplanted the wisdom of the heart, to enforce a principle which cannot be violated without infringing upon one of the most precious rights of the English people, and opposing one of the most sacred claims of civilized humanity.

There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth: it may be unanswerably maintained, that its tendency is to raise, not to depress; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the necessity of looking, for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft, or violence.

And here, as in the Report of the Commisioners, the fundamental principle has been recognized, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their "remedial measures" obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political

economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice: If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indispensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally indispensable to *his* preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But, if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not still contend for the duty of a Christian government, standing *in loco parentis* towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance, involves the protection, of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a

correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeoparding of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to public support, when, from any cause, they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the Paradise Lost, Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming, in the anguish of his soul, —

> "Did I request Thee, Maker, from my clay
> To mould me man; did I solicit Thee
> From darkness to promote me?
> . . . . . My will
> Concurred not to my being."

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator! and under few so afflictive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessaries of life.

Englishmen have, therefore, by the progress of civilization among them, been placed in circumstances more favorable to piety and resignation to the divine will, than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tread its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms even they who have been imprudent and undeserving may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profaneness of life, and dispositions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and rapacity: for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in

bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it precludes.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic calamity, was driven out of her senses, and ever after looked up incessantly to the sky, feeling that her fellow-creatures could do nothing for her relief. Can there be Englishmen who, with a good end in view, would, upon system, expose their brother Englishmen to a like necessity of looking upwards only; or downwards to the earth, after it shall contain no spot where the destitute can demand, by civil right, what by right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy not sunk into this blank despair, but wandering about as strangers in streets and ways, with the hope of succor from casual charity; what have we gained by such a change of scene? Woful is the condition of the famished Northern Indian, dependent, among winter snows, upon the chance-passage of a herd of deer, from which one, if brought down by his rifle-gun, may be made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of some savage Islander, who, when the land has ceased to afford him sustenance,

watches for food which the waves may cast up, or in vain endeavors to extract it from the inexplorable deep. But neither of these is in a state of wretchedness comparable to that which is so often endured in civilized society: multitudes, in all ages, have known it, of whom may be said: —

> "Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,
> And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food."

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalled-for attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political economy, widely spread, did not impugn the principle, and if the safeguards against such extremities were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted by many, that every man who endeavors to find work, *may* find it: were this assertion capable of being verified, there still would remain a question, what kind of work, and how far may the laborer be fit for it? For if sedentary work is to be exchanged for standing, and some light and nice exercise of the fingers, to which an artisan has been accustomed all his life, for severe labor of the arms, the best efforts would turn to little account, and occasion would be given for the unthinking and the unfeeling unwarrantably to reproach those who are put upon such employment, as idle, froward, and unworthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the principle here main

tained would be superseded. But, alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose coast families are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men are so liable to be thrown out of their ordinary means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers; by new discoveries in arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws, in conformity with theories of political economy, which, whether right or wrong in the abstract, have proved a scourge to tens of thousands, by the abruptness with which they have been carried into practice.

But it is urged, — Refuse altogether compulsory relief to the able-bodied, and the number of those who stand in need of relief will steadily diminish, through a conviction of an absolute necessity for greater forethought, and more prudent care of a man's earnings. Undoubtedly it would, but so also would it, and in a much greater degree, if the legislative provisions were retained, and parochial relief administered under the care of the upper classes, as it ought to be. For it has been invariably found, that wherever the funds have been raised and applied under the superintendence of gentlemen and substantial proprietors, acting in vestries, and as overseers, pauperism has diminished accordingly. Proper care in that quarter

would effectually check what is felt in some districts to be one of the worst evils in the poor law system, namely, the readiness of small and needy proprietors to join in imposing rates that seemingly subject them to great hardships, while, in fact, this is done with a mutual understanding, that the relief each is ready to bestow upon his still poorer neighbors will be granted to himself, or his relatives, should it hereafter be applied for.

But let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler quality, in order to know what we have to build upon. Affecting proofs occur in every one's experience, who is acquainted with the unfortunate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to derive their subsistence from aught but their own funds or labor, or to be indebted to parochial assistance for the attainment of any object, however dear to them. A case was reported, the other day, from a coroner's inquest, of a pair who through the space of four years had carried about their dead infant from house to house, and from lodging to lodging, as their necessities drove them, rather than ask the parish to bear the expense of its interment —the poor creatures lived in the hope of one day being able to bury their child at their own cost. It must have been heart-rending to see and hear the mother, who had been called upon to account for the state in which the body was found, make this deposition. By some, judging coldly, if not harshly, this conduct might be imputed to an un

warrantable pride, as she and her husband had, it is true, been once in prosperity. But examples, where the spirit of independence works with equal strength though not with like miserable accompaniments, are frequently to be found even yet among the humblest peasantry and mechanics. There is not, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a like sense of honor may be revived among the people, and their ancient habits of independence restored, without resorting to those severities which the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to be examined, we have a right to expect that lawgivers should take into account the various tempers and dispositions of mankind: while some are led, by the existence of a legislative provision, into idleness and extravagance, the economical virtues might be cherished in others by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail, they have in the Poor Laws a "refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat." Despondency and distraction are no friends to prudence: the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men become reckless, and have a sullen pride in adding to the heap of their own wretchedness. He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-men will be almost irresistibly driven to care little for himself; will lose his self-respect accordingly, and with that loss, what remains to aim of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular experience and general intelligence of the individuals who framed the Act, and of those who in and out of Parliament have approved of and supported it, it may be said, that it proceeds too much upon the presumption that it is a laboring man's own fault if he be not, as the phrase is, beforehand with the world. But the most prudent are liable to be thrown back by sickness, cutting them off from labor, and causing to them expense: and who but has observed how distress creeps upon multitudes without misconduct of their own; and merely from a gradual fall in the price of labor, without a correspondent one in the price of provisions; so that men who may have ventured upon the marriage state with a fair prospect of maintaining their families in comfort and happiness, see them reduced to a pittance which no effort of theirs can increase? Let it be remembered, also, that there are thousands with whom vicious habits of expense are not the cause why they do not store up their gains; but they are generous and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kindred and friends; moreover, they have a faith in Providence, that those who have been prompt to assist others will not be left destitute, should they themselves come to need. By acting from these blended feelings, numbers have rendered themselves incapable of standing up against a sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in com

mon with all who have the misfortune to be in want, if many theorists had their wish, would be thrown upon one or other of those three sharp points of condition before adverted to, from which the intervention of law has hitherto saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the principle contended for makes the gift of life more valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led to the conclusion that its legitimate operation is to make men worthier of that gift: in other words, not to degrade, but to exalt human nature. But the subject must not be dismissed without adverting to the indirect influence of the same principle upon the moral sentiments of a people among whom it is embodied in law. In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim, deservedly eulogized, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer; so, also, might it be maintained, with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds provided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted, or his energies destroyed; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong, or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France, the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer, than one guilty

escape: in France, there is no universal provision for the poor; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed, infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities, whether social or intellectual, of the multitude! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect shown to the bodies of the dead in France; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent, so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history, and of works of fiction, we are not indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us; but, in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be in

dulged for their own sakes: there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action; and if there exist a previous conviction that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like any other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave-Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the scale of humanity; and they cannot but feel so, if they look into themselves, and duly consider their relation to God and their fellow-creatures. That was a noble advance; but a retrograde movement will assuredly be made, if ever the principle, which has been here defended, should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But, after all, there may be little reason to ap-

prehend permanent injury from any experiment that may be tried. On the one side will be human nature rising up in her own defence, and on the other prudential selfishness acting to the same purpose, from a conviction that, without a compulsory provision for the exigencies of the laboring multitude, that degree of ability to regulate the price of labor, which is indispensable for the reasonable interest of arts and manufactures, cannot in Great Britain be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing collection, allusion is made to the state of the workmen congregated in manufactories. In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class of society are subject, and to establith a better harmony between them and their employers, it would be well to repeal such laws as prevent the formation of joint-stock companies. There are, no doubt, many and great obstacles to the formation and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of those whom they would obviously benefit. But the combinations of masters to keep down, unjustly, the price of labor, would be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable; they would encourage economy, inasmuch as they would enable a man to draw profit from his savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture with which he was habitually connected. His little capital would then be

working for him while he was at rest or asleep; he would more clearly perceive the necessity of capital for carrying on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to join in unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, he would be slow to promote local disturbance, or endanger public tranquillity; he would, at least, be loth to act in that way *knowingly:* for it is not to be denied that such societies might be nurseries of opinions unfavorable to a mixed constitution of government, like that of Great Britain. The democratic and republican spirit which they might be apt to foster would not, however, be dangerous in itself, but only as it might act without being sufficiently counterbalanced, either by landed proprietorship, or by a Church extending itself so as to embrace an ever-growing and ever-shifting population of mechanics and artisans. But if the tendencies of such societies would be to make the men prosper who might belong to them, rulers and legislators should rejoice in the result, and do their duty to the state by upholding and extending the influence of that Church to which it owes, in so great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, and its glory.

This, in the temper of the present times, may be difficult, but it is become indispensable, since large towns in great numbers have sprung up

and others have increased tenfold, with little or no dependence upon the gentry and the landed proprietors; and apart from those mitigated feudal institutions, which, till of late, have acted so powerfully upon the composition of the House of Commons. Now it may be affirmed, that, in quarters where there is not an attachment to the Church, or the landed aristocracy, and a pride in supporting them, *there* the people will dislike both, and be ready, upon such incitements as are perpetually recurring, to join in attempts to overthrow them. There is no neutral ground here: from want of due attention to the state of society in large towns and manufacturing districts, and ignorance or disregard of these obvious truths, innumerable well-meaning persons became zealous supporters of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers of which, whether destructive or constructive, they would otherwise have been afraid of; and even the framers of that bill, swayed as they might be by party resentments and personal ambition, could not have gone so far, had not they too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful of the same truths both of fact and philosophy.

But let that pass; and let no opponent of the bill be tempted to compliment his own foresight, by exaggerating the mischiefs and dangers that have sprung from it: let not time be wasted in profitless regrets; and let those party distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated

men who, whatever course they may have pursued, have ever had a bond of union in the wish to save the limited monarchy, and those other institutions that have, under Providence, rendered for so long a period of time this country the happiest and worthiest of which there is any record since the foundation of civil society.

III. A philosophic mind is best pleased when looking at religion in its spiritual bearing; as a guide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and a support amid the instabilities of mortal life: but the Church having been forcibly brought by political considerations to my notice, while treating of the laboring classes, I cannot forbear saying a few words upon that momentous topic.

There is a loud clamor for extensive change in that department. The clamor would be entitled to more respect, if they who are the most eager to swell it with their voices were not generally the most ignorant of the real state of the Church, and the service it renders to the community. *Reform* is the word employed. Let us pause and consider what sense it is apt to carry, and how things are confounded by a lax use of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of something fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies

with respect to the term Reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement, and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves, or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief, that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and that therefore we have experience on our side; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question, that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words; and it is painful to observe, that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the least consideration. They who are the readiest to meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars; and thus is deputed to mechanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

"Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish," is a favorite cry; but, without adverting to other obstacles in the way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its *indiscriminate* adoption, to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the Church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many

thinly peopled districts, especially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be required in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who, being more detached from the temporal concerns of the benefice, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, undertakes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness: while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own, with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in coöperation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted; and his training, managed by a superior, will not be liable to relapse in matters of prudence, seemliness, or in any of the highest cares of his functions; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining

incumbent will be revived, by being in near communion with the ardor of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, be added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in the use of money, that, in his new situation, he is apt to fall unawares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent; whose relations, to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh, with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent, being rarely forgotten, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax, or overstrained. In both

cases it would prove injurious that the error should be remembered, after study and reflection, with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer discernment of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged, that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture to one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unaided by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the world, — that spirit, and the obligations of the sacred office, may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the complex state of society that prevails in England, much more is required, both in large towns, and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreproachable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning, as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As

necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society, and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to support the truths of Christianity, and to diffuse its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the place of his education cannot have brought with him these accomplishments; and if the scheme of equalizing church incomes, which many advisers are much bent upon, be realized, so that there should be little or no secular inducement for a clergyman to desire a removal from the spot where he may chance to have been first set down; surely not only opportunities for obtaining the requisite qualifications would be diminished, but the motives for desiring to obtain them would be proportionably weakened. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge, by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its precepts adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for right as may happen, *that* preacher ranks among the first of benefactors, who, without stooping to the direct treatment of current politics and passing events, can furnish infallible guidance through the delusions that surround them; and who, appealing to

the sanctions of Scripture, may place the grounds of its injunctions in so clear a light, that disaffection shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and loyalty cleansed from the dishonor of a blind and prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civic duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important; it is still more so for softening and subduing private and personal discontents. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves, because their survey of the dispensations of Providence has been partial and narrow; but now that readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are *taught*, and repinings are engendered everywhere, by imputations being cast upon the government; and are prolonged or aggravated by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice in rulers, when the individual himself only is in fault. If a Christian pastor be competent to deal with these humors, as they may be dealt with, and by no members of society so successfully, both from more frequent and more favorable opportunities of intercourse, and by aid of the authority with which he speaks, he will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching distress by submission to God's will, and lightens, by patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing, of public good at least, is generally acceptable, but what we be-

lieve can be traced to preconceived intention, and specific acts and formal contrivances of human understanding. A Christian instructor thoroughly accomplished would be a standing restraint upon such presumptuousness of judgment, by impressing the truth that,

> In the unreasoning progress of the world,
> A wiser spirit is at work for us,
> A better eye than ours. MS.

Revelation points to the purity and peace of a future world; but our sphere of duty is upon earth; and the relations of impure and conflicting things to each other must be understood, or we shall be perpetually going wrong, in all but goodness of intention; and goodness of intention will itself relax through frequent disappointment. How desirable, then, is it, that a minister of the Gospel should be versed in the knowledge of existing facts, and be accustomed to a wide range of social experience! Nor is it less desirable for the purpose of counterbalancing and tempering in his own mind that ambition with which spiritual power is as apt to be tainted as any other species of power which men covet or possess.

It must be obvious that the scope of the argument is to discourage an attempt which would introduce into the Church of England an equality of income, and station, upon the model of that of Scotland. The sounder part of the Scottish nation

know what good their ancestors derived from their Church, and feel how deeply the living generation is indebted to it. They respect and love it, as accommodated in so great a measure to a comparatively poor country, through the far greater portion of which prevails a uniformity of employment; but the acknowledged deficiency of theological learning among the clergy of that Church is easily accounted for by this very equality. What else may be wanting there, it would be unpleasant to inquire, and might prove invidious to determine: one thing, however, is clear, that in all countries the temporalities of the Church Establishment should bear an analogy to the state of society, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence through the whole community. In a country so rich and luxurious as England, the character of its clergy must unavoidably sink, and their influence be every where impaired, if individuals from the upper ranks, and men of leading talents, are to have no inducements to enter into that body but such as are purely spiritual. And this "tinge of secularity" is no reproach to the clergy, nor does it imply a deficiency of spiritual endowments. Parents and guardians, looking forward to sources of honorable maintenance for their children and wards, often direct their thoughts early towards the Church, being determined partly by outward circumstances, and partly by indications of seriousness, or intellectual fitness. It is natural that a

boy or youth, with such a prospect before him should turn his attention to those studies, and be led into those habits of reflection, which will in some degree tend to prepare him for the duties he is hereafter to undertake. As he draws nearer to the time when he will be called to these duties, he is both led and compelled to examine the Scriptures. He becomes more and more sensible of their truth. Devotion grows in him; and what might begin in temporal considerations will end (as in a majority of instances we trust it does) in a spiritual-mindedness not unworthy of that Gospel, the lessons of which he is to teach, and the faith of which he is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here repeated an observation, which, from its obviousness and importance, must have been frequently made, namely, that the impoverishing of the clergy, and bringing their incomes much nearer to a level, would not cause them to become less worldly-minded: the emoluments, howsoever reduced, would be as eagerly sought for, but by men from lower classes in society; men who, by their manners, habits, abilities, and the scanty measure of their attainments, would unavoidably be less fitted for their station, and less competent to discharge its duties.

Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat upon the subject of best providing for the clergy notions which have been sincerely entertained by good men, with a view to the improvement of the

order, and eagerly caught at and dwelt upon by the designing, for its degradation and disparagement. Some are beguiled by what they call the *voluntary system*, not seeing (what stares one in the face at the very threshold) that they who stand in most need of religious instruction are unconscious of the want, and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to make any sacrifice in order to supply it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the depraved take from the means of their gratifications and pursuits, to support a discipline that cannot advance without uprooting the trees that bear the fruit which they devour so greedily? Will *they* pay the price of that seed whose harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world? A voluntary system for the religious exigencies of a people numerous and circumstanced as we are! Not more absurd would it be to expect that a knot of boys should draw upon the pittance of their pocket-money to build schools, or out of the abundance of their discretion be able to select fit masters to teach and keep them in order! Some, who clearly perceive the incompetence and folly of such a scheme for the agricultural part of the people, nevertheless think it feasible in large towns, where the rich might subscribe for the religious instruction of the poor. Alas! they know little of the thick darkness that spreads over the streets and alleys of our large towns. The parish of Lambeth, a few years since, contained not more than

one church and three or four small proprietary chapels, while dissenting chapels, of every denomination, were still more scantily found there; yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted at that time to upwards of fifty thousand. Were the parish church and the chapels of the Establishment existing there an *impediment* to the spread of the Gospel among that mass of people? Who shall dare to say so? But if any one, in the face of the fact which has just been stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to the same effect from various other quarters, should still contend, that a voluntary system is sufficient for the spread and maintenance of religion, we would ask, What kind of religion? Wherein would it differ, among the many, from deplorable fanaticism?

For the preservation of the Church Establishment, all men, whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous: but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country! and how much is it to be regretted, that, while its zealous friends yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much overrate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communication with her ministers! This deplorable state of things

was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated, or too much impeded, by legal obstacles: these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed; and, keeping clear of intolerance and injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the Church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still-increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth, that, as her Church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the Church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of finical taste, not by cutting off this

or that from her Articles or Canons, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive after alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtilty had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parhelion of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed Parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or compelled to follow, it may be confidently hoped that individuals, acting in their private capacities, will endeavor to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. Is it too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, or where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will

in their several neighborhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry?

Moreover, the force of public opinion is rapidly increasing: and some may bend to it, who are not so happy as to be swayed by a higher motive; especially they who derive large incomes from lay-impropriations, in tracts of country where ministers are few and meagrely provided for. A claim still stronger may be acknowledged by those who, round their superb habitations, or elsewhere, walk over vast estates which were lavished upon their ancestors by royal favoritism, or purchased at insignificant prices after church spoliation; such proprietors, though not conscience-stricken (there is no call for that), may be prompted to make a return for which their tenantry and dependents will learn to bless their names. An impulse has been given; an accession of means from these several sources, coöperating with a *well*-considered change in the distribution of some parts of the property at present possessed by the Church, a change scrupulously founded upon due respect to law and justice, will, we trust, bring about so much of what her friends desire, that the rest may be calmly waited for, with thankfulness for what shall have been obtained.

Let it not be thought unbecoming in a layman, to have treated at length a subject with which the clergy are more intimately conversant. All may

without impropriety, speak of what deeply concerns all; nor need an apology be offered for going over ground which has been trod before so ably and so often: without pretending, however, to anything of novelty, either in matter or manner something may have been offered to view which will save the writer from the imputation of having little to recommend his labor, but goodness of intention.

It was with reference to thoughts and feelings expressed in verse, that I entered upon the above notices, and with verse I will conclude. The passage is extracted from my manuscripts, written above thirty years ago: it turns upon the individual dignity which humbleness of social condition does not preclude, but frequently promotes. I has no direct bearing upon clubs for the discussion of public affairs, nor upon political or trade-unions; but if a single workman — who, being a member of one of those clubs, runs the risk of becoming an agitator, or who, being enrolled in a union, must be left without a will of his own, and therefore a slave — should read these lines, and be touched by them, I should indeed rejoice; and little would I care for losing credit as a poet with intemperate critics, who think differently from me upon political philosophy or public measures, if the sober minded admit that, in general views, my affections have been moved, and my imagination exercised under and *for* the guidance of reason.

"Here might I pause, and bend in reverence
To Nature, and the power of human minds;
To men as they are men within themselves.
How oft high service is performed within,
When all the external man is rude in show;
Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,
But a mere mountain chapel that protects
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower!
Of these, said I, shall be my song; of these,
If future years mature me for the task,
Will I record the praises, making verse
Deal boldly with substantial things,—in truth
And sanctity of passion speak of these,
That justice may be done, obeisance paid
Where it is due. Thus haply shall I teach,
Inspire, through unadulterated ears
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope; my theme
No other than the very heart of man,
As found among the best of those who live,
Not unexalted by religious faith,
Nor uninformed by books, good books, though few,
In Nature's presence: thence may I select
Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,
And miserable love that is not pain
To hear of, for the glory that redounds
Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.
Be mine to follow with no timid step
Where knowledge leads me; it shall be my pride
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,
Speaking no dream, but things oracular,
Matter not lightly to be heard by those
Who to the letter of the outward promise
Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit
In speech, and for communion with the world
Accomplished, minds whose faculties are then
Most active when they are most eloquent,
And elevated most when most admired.
Men may be found of other mould than these;
Who are their own upholders, to themselves

Encouragement and energy and will;
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words
As native passion dictates. Others, too,
There are, among the walks of homely life,
Still higher, men for contemplation framed;
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase;
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,
The thought, the image, and the silent joy:
Words are but under-agents in their souls;
When they are grasping with their greatest strength,
They do not breathe among them; this I speak
In gratitude to God, who feeds our hearts
For his own service, knoweth, loveth us,
When we are unregarded by the world"

INDEX TO THE POEMS.

[In case of need, seek under the word Lines, Sonnet, or Stanzas.]

Abuse of Monastic Power, iv. 110
A Character, iv. 234
A Complaint, i. 280
Acquittal of the Bishops, iv. 133
Address from the Spirit of Cockermouth Castle, iv. 187
——— to a Child, i. 191
——— to Kilchurn Castle, iii. 20
——— to my Infant Daughter, ii. 82
——— to the Scholars of the Village School of ———, v. 147
Admonition, ii. 321
A Fact, and an Imagination, iv. 274
A Farewell, i. 266
Afflictions of England, iv. 128
A Flower-Garden, ii. 20
After leaving Italy, iii. 224
———, iii. 224
After-thought (Riv. Dud.), iii. 270
——— (Tour Contin.), iii. 148
A Gravestone. — Worcester Cathedral, ii. 378
A Jewish Family, ii. 260
Airey-Force Valley, ii. 121
Aix-la-Chapelle, iii. 140
Alfred, iv. 89
Alfred's Descendants, iv. 90
Alice Fell, i. 196
American Tradition, iii. 258
Among the Ruins of a Convent in the Apennines, iii. 222
A Morning Exercise, ii. 17
Anecdote for Fathers, i. 209
An Evening Walk, i. 3
A Night-Piece, ii. 120
A Night Thought, iv. 259
Animal Tranquillity and Decay, v. 134
An Interdict, iv. 96
Anticipation, Oct. 1803, iii. 81
A Parsonage in Oxfordshire, ii. 370
A Place of Burial in the South of Scotland, iii. 276
A Plea for Authors, ii. 390
A Poet's Epitaph, iv. 243
Apology (Ecc. Son), iv. 84
——— (Ecc. Son), iv. 114
——— (Pun. of Death), iv. 340
——— (Yar. Rev.), iii. 296
A Prophecy, Feb. 1807, iii. 87
Archbishop Chichely to Henry V., iv. 107
Artegal and Elidure, i. 255
Aspects of Christianity in America, iv. 136
———, iv. 137
———, iv. 137
At Albano, iii. 208
At Applethwaite, ii. 322
At Bologna, iv. 328

At Bologna, iv. 329
———, iv. 330
At Dover, iii. 184
At Florence, iii. 220
———, iii. 221
———, iii. 222
At Furness Abbey, ii. 397
———, ii. 397
A Tradition of Oker Hill, ii. 380
At Rome, iii. 204
———, iii. 204
———, iii. 205
———, iii. 206
At the Convent of Camaldoli, iii. 215
———, iii. 216
———, iii. 217
At the Grave of Burns, iii. 2
At Vallombrosa, iii. 218
A Wren's Nest, ii. 70

Baptism, iv. 141
Before the Picture of the Baptist, iii. 220
Beggars, ii. 140
———, Sequel, ii. 142
Bothwell Castle, iii. 290
Bruges, iii. 136
———, iii. 137

Calais, Aug. 1802, iii. 65
———, 15 Aug. 1802, iii. 67
Canute, iv. 92
Captivity. — Mary Queen of Scots, ii. 359
Casual Incitement, iv. 80
Catechizing, iv. 142
Cathedrals, etc., iv. 155
Cave of Staffa, iv. 209
———, iv. 210
———, iv. 211
Cenotaph, v. 145
Characteristics of a Child, i. 190
Character of the Happy Warrior, iv. 268
Charles the Second, iv. 130
Church to be erected, iv. 153
———, iv. 154
Cistertian Monastery, iv. 100
Clerical Integrity, iv. 132
Conclusion (Ecc. Son.), iv. 158
———(Misc. Son.), ii. 366
———(Pun. of Death) iv. 339
———(Riv. Dud.), iii. 269
Confirmation, iv. 143
———, iv. 143
Congratulation, iv. 152
Conjectures, iv. 73
Conversion, iv. 83
Corruptions of the Higher Clergy, iv. 109
Countess' Pillar, iii. 294
Cranmer, iv. 120
Crusaders, iv. 103
Crusades, iv. 94

Danish Conquests, iv. 91
Decay of Piety, ii. 334
Dedication (Con. Tour), iii. 135
———(Misc.Son.), ii. 320
———(W.Doe ofR.), iv.1
Departure. — Vale of Grasmere, iii. 1
Descriptive Sketches, i. 20
Desultory Stanzas, iii. 184
Devotional Incitements, ii. 250
Dion, ii. 204
Dirge, v. 148
Dissensions, iv. 78
Dissolution of the Monasteries, iv. 111
———, iv. 112
———, iv. 113
Distractions, iv. 124
Druidical Excommunication, iv. 74

Eagles, iii. 280
Echo, upon the Gemmi, iii. 173
Edward VI., iv. 118
———signing the Warrant, iv. 118
Effusion. — Banks of the Brau iii. 55
———. Tower of Tell iii. 152
Ejaculation, iv. 158

Elegiac Musings. — Colcorton Hall, v. 166
—— Stanzas, 1824, v. 163
————, F. W. Goddard, iii. 177
————, Peele Castle, v. 159
—— Verses. John Wordsworth, 1805, v. 156
Elizabeth, iv. 122
Ellen Irwin, iii. 11
Emigrant French Clergy, iv. 151
Eminent Reformers, iv. 123
————, iv. 124
Engelberg, iii. 149
English Reformers in Exile, iv. 122
Epistle to Sir George Beaumont, Bart., v. 1
Epitaph. Langdale Chapelyard, v. 146
Epitaphs from Chiabrera, v. 136
Expostulation and Reply, iv. 230
Extempore Effusion upon the Death of James Hogg, v. 173
Extract from the Conclusion of a Poem, i. 1

Fancy and Tradition, iii. 293
Farewell Lines, i. 372
Feelings of a French Royalist, iii. 117
———— a Noble Biscayan, iii. 100
———— the Tyrolese, iii. 92
Fidelity, iv. 263
Filial Piety, ii. 381
Fish-Women, iii. 135
Floating Island (D. W.), v. 27
Flowers, iii. 252
—— Cave of Staffa, iv 211
Foresight, i. 189
Forms of Prayer at Sea, iv. 147
Fort Fuentes, iii. 155
French Revolution, ii. 193
From the Alban Hills, iii. 209
Funeral Service, iv. 148

General View. — Reformation, iv. 121
Glad Tidings, iv. 81
Glen Almain, iii. 16
Gold and Silver Fishes in a Vase, v. 13
Goody Blake and Harry Gill, v. 41
Gordale, ii. 364
Grace Darling, v. 52
Greenock, iv. 215
Guilt and Sorrow, i. 51
Gunpowder Plot, iv. 125
Gypsies, ii. 144

Hart-Leap Well, ii. 171
Hart's-Horn Tree, iii. 293
Her Eyes are Wild, i. 377
Highland Hut, iii. 284
Hint from the Mountains, ii. 52
Hints for the Fancy, iii. 256
Hoffer, iii. 90
Humanity, iv. 289
Hymn for the Boatmen. — Heidelberg, iii. 142

Illustrated Books and Newspapers, iv. 257
Illustration, iv. 126
Imaginative Regrets, iv. 115
Incident at Bruges, iii. 137
———— characteristic of a Favorite Dog, iv. 260
Indignation of a High-minded Spaniard, iii. 102
Influence abused, iv. 90
———— of Natural Objects, i. 219
In Lombardy, iii. 223
Inscription. At the Request of Sir G. H. Beaumont, v. 72
————. Black Comb, v. 75
————. Crosthwaite Ch., v. 175
———— For a Seat in the Groves of Colcorton, v. 73
————. Hermitage, v. 84
————. Hermit's Cell, v 79

Inscription. In a Garden of Sir G. H. Beaumont, v. 71
————. In the Grounds of Coleorton, v. 70
————. Island at Grasmere, v. 74
————. Island at Rydal, v. 76
————. On the Banks of a Rocky Stream, v. 86
————. Spring of the Hermitage, v. 83
————. upon a Rock, v. 81
Inside of King's College Chapel, iv. 156
————————, iv. 156
————————, iv. 157
Introduction(Ecc. Son.), iv. 72
Invocation to the Earth, v. 161
Iona, iv. 212
——, iv. 213
Isle of Man, iv. 200
————, iv. 200

JOURNEY renewed, iii. 266

LAMENT of Mary Queen of Scots, i. 285
Laodamia, ii. 196.
Latimer and Ridley, iv. 120
Latitudinarianism, iv. 130
Laud, iv. 127
Liberty. — Gold and Silver Fishes, v. 15
Lines. Above Tintern Abbey, ii. 186
——. Album of the Countess of Lonsdale, v. 48
——. Blank Leaf of "The Excursion," v. 163
——. By the Sea-shore, iv. 174
——. By the Sea-side, iv. 162
——. By the Side of Rydal Mere, iv. 165
——. Charles Lamb, v. 168
——. Coast of Cumberland, iv. 161
——. Expected Invasion, 1803, iii. 80
Lines. In a Boat at Evening i. 18
——. In Early Spring, iv 233
——. Macpherson's Ossian iv. 206
——. Mr. Fox, v. 160
——. Portrait, iv. 313
——. ————, iv. 318
——. Suggested by a Picture of the Bird of Paradise ii. 259
——. Upon seeing a colored Drawing of the Bird of Paradise, iv. 320
——. Yew-tree Seat, i. 49
London, 1802, iii. 73
Love-lies-bleeding, ii. 73
————————, Companion to, ii. 74
Loving and Liking, i. 369
Louisa, i. 272
Lowther, iv. 221
Lucy Gray, i. 199

MALHAM Cove, ii. 364
Mary Queen of Scots, iv. 189
Maternal Grief, i. 302
Matthew, iv. 247
Memorial. — Lake of Thun, iii. 146
Memory, iv. 287
Michael, i. 342
Missions and Travels, iv. 88
Monastery of Old Bangor, iv. 80
Monastic Voluptuousness, iv. 111
Monks and Schoolmen, iv 101
Monument of Mrs. Howard, iv. 217
Musings near Aquapendente iii. 190
Mutability, iv. 150

NEAR Rome. In Sight of St. Peter's, iii. 207
—— Calais, on the Road leading to Arires, Aug. 7, 1802 iii. 65

Near the Lake of Thrasymene, iii. 210
———————— iii. 210
New Churches, iv. 152
—— Churchyard, iv. 154
Nunnery, iv. 218
Nun's Well, Brigham, iv. 188
Nutting, ii. 123

Obligations of Civil to Religious Liberty, iv. 134
Ode, iii. 82
—— composed in January, 1816, iii. 125
—— composed on an Evening of Extraordinary Splendor, iv. 170
———————— on May Morning, iv. 306
——. Intimations of Immortality, v. 177
——. 1815, iii. 120
——. 1814, iii. 111
—— to Duty, iv. 266
—— to Lycoris, iv. 279
————————, iv. 281
Old Abbeys, iv. 150
On a Portrait of the Duke of Wellington, ii. 385
Open Prospect, iii. 256
Other Benefits, iv. 102
————————, iv. 102
—— Influences, iv. 85
Our Lady of the Snow, iii. 150
Oxford, May 30, 1820, ii. 367
————————, ii. 368

Papal Abuses, iv. 97
——— Dominion, iv. 98
Pastoral Character, iv. 139
Patriotic Sympathies, iv. 129
Paulinus, iv. 82
Persecution, iv. 76
———————— of the Covenanters, iv. 132
Personal Talk, iv. 254
Persuasion, iv. 82
Peter Bell, ii. 272
Picture of Daniel in the Lion's Den, iii. 291
Places of Worship, iv. 139
Plea for the Historian, iii. 206
Poor Robin, v. 21
Power of Music, ii. 133
Prelude. Poems chiefly of Early and Late Years, v. 46
Presentiments, ii. 241
Primitive Saxon Clergy, iv. 84
Processions. Chamouny, iii. 174

Recollection of the Portrait of Henry VIII., ii. 368
Recovery, iv. 76
Reflections, iv. 116
Regrets, iv. 149
Remembrance of Collins, i. 19
Repentance, i. 296
Reproof, iv. 87
Resolution and Independence, ii. 155
Rest and be thankful. — Glencroe, iii. 283
Retirement, ii. 348
Return, iii. 259
Revival of Popery, iv. 119
Richard I., iv. 95
Rob Roy's Grave, iii. 23
Roman Antiquities. — Bishopstone, ii. 379
————————. Old Penrith, iii. 295
Rural Architecture, i. 211
—— Ceremony, iv. 148
—— Illusions, ii. 75
Ruth, ii. 145

Sacheverel, iv. 135
Sacrament, iv. 144
Saints, iv. 113
Saxon Conquest, iv. 79
——— Monasteries, iv. 88
Scene in Venice, iv. 97
—— on the Lake of Brientz, iii. 149
Seathwaite Chapel, iii. 260
Seclusion, iv. 86
————————, iv. 86
Sheep-washing, iii. 263
Siege of Vienna raised by John Sobieski, iii. 118
Simon Lee, iv. 237

Sky Prospect.—France, iii. 182
Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, ii. 179
—— for the Spinning-wheel, ii. 51
—— for the Wandering Jew, ii. 63
Sonnet after visiting Waterloo, iii. 139
—— at Bala-Sala, iv. 202
—— at Sea off the Isle of Man, iv. 197
—— between Namur and Liege, iii. 140
—— by a Retired Mariner, iv. 201
—— by the Sea-shore, Isle of Man, iv. 199
—— composed after reading a Newspaper, iv. 323
—— among the Ruins of a Castle in North Wales, ii. 371
—— at —— Castle, iii. 28
—— at Rydal, on May Morning, 1838, iii. 225
—— by the Sea-side, near Calais, August, 1802, iii. 64
—— by the Side of Grasmere Lake, 1807, iii. 88
—— during a Storm, ii. 352
—— in Roslin Chapel, iii. 278
—— in the Glen of Loch Etive, iii. 280
—— in the Valley near Dover, iii. 70
—— on a May Morning, 1838, ii. 385
—— on Easter Sunday, ii. 333
—— on the Banks of a Rocky Stream, ii. 362
—— on the Eve of the Marriage of a Friend, ii. 334
Sonnet composed upon Westminster Bridge, ii. 365
——, Convention of Cintra, iii. 89
——, iii. 90
——, 1811, iii. 105
——, 1811, iii. 106
——, 1801, iii. 66
——, 1810, iii. 99
——, 1810, iii. 103
——, 1830, ii. 380
——, from Michael Angelo, ii. 335
——, ii. 336
——, ii. 336
——, Hambleton Hills, ii. 349
——, Harbor of Boulogne, iii. 182
—— in a Carriage.—Rhine, iii. 142
—— in Allusion to various recent Histories, iv. 325
——, iv. 326
——, iv. 327
—— in Sight of Cocker mouth, iv. 186
—— in the Cathedral at Cologne, iii. 141
—— in the Channel on the Coast of Cumberland, iv. 196
—— in the Frith of Clyde, iv. 204
——, iv. 204
—— in the Pass of Killicranky, iii. 32
—— in the Sound of Mull, iii. 281
—— in the Woods of Rydal, ii. 373
——, June, 1820, ii. 370
——, Kendal and Windermere Railway, ii. 395
——, Nov. 1, ii. 351
——, Nov. 1806, iii. 81
——, Nov. 1813, iii. 110
——, Nov. 1836, ii. 338
——, occasioned by the Battle of Waterloo, iii. 117
——, iii. 11

Sonnet, Oct. 1803, iii. 75
———————, iii. 76
———————, iii. 78
——— on a Celebrated Event in Ancient History, iii. 85
———————, iii. 86
——— on approaching the Staub-bach, iii. 144
——— on entering Douglas Bay, iv. 198
——— on hearing the "Ranz des Vaches," iii. 154
——— on revisiting Dunolly Castle, iv. 205
——— on the Death of his Majesty, George III., ii. 369
——— on the Departure of Sir Walter Scott, iii. 276
——— on the Detraction which followed, &c., ii. 331
——— on the Extinction of the Venetian Republic, iii. 67
——— on the Final Submission of the Tyrolese, iii. 94
———on the Sight of a Manse in the South of Scotland, iii. 277
———, Sept. 1, 1802, iii. 69
———, Sept. 1815, ii. 351
———, Sept. 1802. — Near Dover, iii. 71
——— suggested at Tyndrum, iii. 282
——— suggested by a View from an Eminence, iii. 292
——— suggested by the Monument of Mrs. Howard, iv. 218
——— suggested by the View of Lancaster Castle, iv. 332
——— suggested by Westall's Views, ii. 363
———, Valley of Dover, iii. 183
——— upon a Blank Leaf in the Complete Angler, ii. 330
——— upon the late General Fast, iv. 324
——— upon the Sight of a Beautiful Picture, ii. 325
——— written in London Sept. 1802, iii. 72
Sonnet written in very early Youth, i. 2
Spanish Guerillas, iii. 104
Sponsors, iv. 141
Stanzas. Catholic Cantons, iii. 147
———. Cora Linn, iii. 52
——— in Germany, iv. 241
——— in the Simplon Pass, iii. 172
———. Needle-case, ii. 54
———. On the Power of Sound, ii. 262
———. Sept. 1819, iv. 283
———. ———, iv. 284
———. St. Bees, iv. 190
——— written in March, ii. 138
——— written in my Pocket Copy of Thomson's Castle of Indolence, i. 269
Star-Gazers, ii. 135
St. Catherine of Ledbury, ii. 360
Steamboats, Viaducts, and Railways, iv. 219
Stepping Westward, iii. 18
Stray Pleasures, ii. 64
Struggle of the Britons, iv. 78

TEMPTATIONS from Roman Refinements, iv. 77
Thanksgiving after Childbirth, iv. 145
The Affliction of Margaret ———, i. 298
The Armenian Lady's Love, i. 361
The Avon, iii. 291
The Black Stones of Iona, iv 214
The Blind Highland Boy, iii. 37
The Borderers, i. 80
The Brothers, i. 238
The Brownie, iii. 288
The Brownie's Cell, iii. 48
The Childless Father, i. 307
The Church of San Salvador iii. 157
The Column lying in the Simplon Pass, iii. 171

The Commination Service, iv. 146
The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman, i. 288
The Contrast, ii. 58
The Cottager to her Infant, i. 301
The Council of Clermont, iv. 94
The Cuckoo and the Nightingale, v. 97
The Cuckoo at Laverna, iii. 211
The Cuckoo-Clock, ii. 253
The Danish Boy, ii. 60
The Dunolly Eagle, iv. 206
The Earl of Breadalbane's Ruined Mansion, iii. 282
The Eclipse of the Sun, 1820, iii. 164
The Egyptian Maid, iii. 229
The Emigrant Mother, i. 308
The Excursion, vi. 1
The Faëry Chasm, iii 255
The Fall of the Aar, iii. 145
The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale, v. 126
The Force of Prayer, iv. 271
The Forsaken, i. 277
The Fountain, iv. 251
The French and the Spanish Guerillas, iii. 104
The French Army in Russia, iii. 106
———————, iii. 108
The Germans on the Heights of Hockheim, iii. 109
The Gleaner, v. 22
The Green Linnet, ii. 38
The Haunted Tree, ii. 224
The Highland Broach, iii. 285
The Horn of Egremont Castle, v. 36
The Idiot Boy, i. 324
The Idle Shepherd-Boys, i. 205
The Infant M. M., ii. 376
The Italian Itinerant, iii. 159
The King of Sweden, iii. 68
The Kitten and Falling Leaves, ii. 77
The Laborer's Noonday Hymn, iv. 305
The Last of the Flock, i. 291
The Last Supper, iii. 163
The Liturgy, iv. 140
The Longest Day, i. 221
The Marriage Ceremony, iv. 144
The Matron of Jedborough and her Husband, iii. 33
The Monument called Long Meg and her Daughters, iv. 220
The Mother's Return, i. 193
The Norman Boy, i. 225
The Norman Conquest, iv. 92
The Oak and the Broom, ii. 25
The Oak of Guernica, iii. 101
The Old Cumberland Beggar, v. 119
The Pass of Kirkstone, ii. 209
The Pet Lamb, i. 213
The Pilgrim's Dream, ii. 66
The Pillar of Trajan, iii. 226
The Pine of Monte Mario at Rome, iii. 203
The Plain of Donnerdale, iii. 261
The Poet and the Caged Turtledove, ii. 69
The Poet's Dream, i. 227
The Point at Issue, iv. 117
The Prelude, vii. 1
The Primrose of the Rock, ii. 239
The Prioress' Tale, v. 87
The Redbreast, i. 373
——————— chasing the Butterfly, ii. 49
The Resting-Place, iii. 264
The Reverie of Poor Susan, ii. 132
There was a Boy, ii. 117
The River Eden, iv. 216
The Russian Fugitive, v. 56
The Sailor's Mother, i. 305
The Seven Sisters, ii. 46
The Simplon Pass, ii. 125
The Small Celandine, v. 131
The Solitary Reaper, iii. 19
The Somnambulist, iv. 222
The Source of the Danube iii. 144

The Sparrow's Nest, i. 188
The Stepping-Stones, iii. 254
————————, iii. 254
The Tables turned, iv. 232
The Thorn, ii. 162
The Three Cottage Girls, iii. 168
The Town of Schwytz, iii. 154
The Triad, ii. 225
The Trosachs, iii. 278
The Two April Mornings, iv. 248
The Two Thieves, v. 132
The Vaudois, iv. 105
The Virgin, iv. 114
The Wagoner, ii. 85
The Warning. — Sequel to the First-born, iv. 298
The Waterfall and the Eglantine, ii. 23
The Westmoreland Girl, i. 233
The White Doe of Rylstone, iv. 1
The Widow on Windermere Side, i. 359
The Wild Duck's Nest, ii. 329
The Wishing-Gate, ii. 233
The Wishing-Gate destroyed, ii. 236
Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland, iii. 71
Thoughts on the Seasons, iv. 294
Thoughts.—Banks of the Nith, iii. 6
To ————, i. 276
To ————, i. 281
To ————, i. 284
To ————, ii. 377
To a Butterfly, i. 187
————————, i. 265
To a Child. — Written in her Album, v. 48
To a Friend on the Banks of the Derwent, iv. 188
To a Highland Girl, iii. 13
To a Lady. — Madeira Flowers, ii. 56
To an Octogenarian, v. 26
To a Painter, ii. 387
To a Painter, ii. 387
To a Redbreast (S. H.), v. 24
To a Sexton, ii. 30
To a Skylark, ii. 39
————————, ii. 195
To a Snowdrop, ii. 353
To a Young Lady who had been, &c., &c., ii. 220
To B. R. Haydon, ii. 344
————————. Picture of Napoleon Bucnaparte, ii. 383
To Cordelia M——, iv. 228
To Enterprise, ii. 212
To H. C., i. 217
To H. C. Robinson, iii. 189
To ————, in her Seventieth Year, ii. 377
To Joanna, ii. 3
To Lady Beaumont, ii. 354
To Lucca Giordano, iv 180
To Lycoris, v. 69
To May, iv. 309
To M. H., ii. 10
To my Sister, iv. 235
To ————, on her First Ascent of Helvellyn, ii. 218
To ————, on the Birth of her First-born Child, iv. 295
To Rotha Q——, ii. 378
To S. H., ii. 332
To Sleep, ii. 327
————, ii. 328
To the Author's Portrait, ii. 382
To the Clouds, ii. 255
To the Cuckoo, ii. 118
————————, ii. 375
To the Daisy, ii. 32
————————, ii. 36
————————, iv. 246
————————, v. 153
To the Earl of Lonsdale, iv. 221
To the Lady E. B. and the Hon. Miss P., ii. 372
To the Lady Fleming.—Foundation of Rydal Chapel, v. 30
———— on the same Occasion, v. 35
To the Lady Mary Lowther ii. 353
To the Memory of Raisley Calvert, ii. 342

To the Men of Kent, iii. 78
To the Moon, iv. 175
————, Rydal, iv. 178
To the Pennsylvanians, iv. 328
To the Planet Venus, Jan. 1838, ii. 392
————, Loch Lomond, iii. 289
To the Poet, John Dyer, ii. 330
To the Rev. Chr. Wordsworth, D. D., ii. 392
To the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth, iii. 246
To the River Derwent, iv. 186
To the River Greta, iv. 185
To the Small Celandine, ii. 41
————, ii. 43
To the Sons of Burns, iii. 9
To the Spade of a Friend, iv. 257
To the Torrent at the Devil's Bridge, ii. 372
To Thomas Clarkson, iii. 86
To Toussaint L'Ouverture, iii. 69
Tradition, iii. 262
Translation of the Bible, iv. 116
Transubstantiation, iv. 105
Trepidation of the Druids, iv. 74
Tributary Stream, iii. 260
Tribute to the Memory of a Favorite Dog, iv. 262
Troilus and Cresida, v. 112
Troubles of Charles the First, iv. 126
Tynwald Hill, iv. 202

UNCERTAINTY, iv. 75

VALEDICTORY Sonnet, ii. 391
Vaudracour and Julia, i. 312
Vernal Ode, ii. 245
View from the Top of Black Comb, ii. 222
Visitation of the Sick, iv. 146

WALDENSES, iv. 107
Walton's Book of Lives, iv. 131
Wars of York and Lancaster iv. 108
Water-Fowl, ii. 221
We are Seven, i. 202
Wicliffe, iv. 109
William the Third, iv. 134

YARROW Revisited, iii. 271
———— Visited, iii. 60
———— Unvisited, iii. 29
Yew-Trees, ii. 121

INDEX TO THE FIRST LINES.

A BARKING sound the shepherd hears, iv. 263
A Book came forth of late, called Peter Bell, ii. 331
A bright-haired company of youthful slaves, iv. 80
Abruptly paused the strife; — the field throughout, iii. 109
A dark plume fetch me from yon blasted yew, iii. 259
Adieu, Rydalian Laurels! that have grown, iv. 183
Advance, come forth from thy Tyrolean ground, iii. 91
Aerial Rock — whose solitary brow, ii. 327
A famous man is Robin Hood, iii. 23
Affections lose their object; Time brings forth, v. 26
A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by, ii. 328
A genial hearth, a hospitable board, iv. 139
Age! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers, iii. 33
Ah! think how one compelled for life to abide, iv. 338
Ah, when the Body, round which in love we clung, iv. 85
Ah! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor pen, iii. 99
Ah, why deceive ourselves! by no mere fit, iv. 328
Aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of light, iv. 121
Alas! what boots the long, laborious quest, iii. 92
A little onward lend thy guiding hand, iv. 276
All praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed, ii. 337
A love-lorn Maid, at some far-distant time, iii. 262
Ambition, — following down this far-famed slope, iii. 171
Amid a fertile region green with wood, iii. 291
Amid the smoke of cities did you pass, ii. 3
Amid this dance of objects sadness steals, iii. 142
Among a grave fraternity of Monks, iv. 318
Among the dwellers in the silent fields, v. 52
Among the dwellings framed by birds, ii. 70
Among the mountains were we nursed, loved Stream, iv. 186
A month, sweet Little-ones, is past, i. 193
An age hath been when Earth was proud, iv. 279
A narrow girdle of rough stones and crags, ii. 7
And is it among rude, untutored Dales, iii. 93
And is this — Yarrow? — *This* the Stream, iii. 60

And, not in vain embodied to the sight, iv. 102
And shall, the Pontiff asks, profaneness flow, iv. 94
And what is Penance with her knotted thong, iv. 110
And what melodious sounds at times prevail, iv. 102
An Orpheus! an Orpheus! yes, Faith may grow bold, ii. 182
Another year! — another deadly blow! iii. 81
A pen — to register; a key, iv. 287
A Pilgrim, when the summer day, ii 66
A plague on your languages, German and Norse, iv. 241
A pleasant music floats along the Mere, iv. 92
A Poet! — He hath put his heart to school, ii. 383
A point of life between my Parents' dust, iv. 186
Army of Clouds! ye winged Host in troops, ii. 255
A Rock there is whose homely front, ii. 239
A Roman Master stands on Grecian ground, iii. 85
Around a wild and woody hill, iii. 146
Arran! a single-crested Teneriffe, iv. 204
Art thou a Statist, in the van, iv. 243
Art thou the bird whom Man loves best, ii. 49
——— A simple Child, i. 202
As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest, iv. 104
As indignation mastered grief, my tongue, iii. 224
As leaves are to the tree whereon they grow, iv. 330
A slumber did my spirit seal, ii. 130
As often as I murmur here, ii. 63
As star that shines dependent upon star, iv. 139
As the cold aspect of a sunless way, ii. 359
A Stream, to mingle with your favorite Dee, ii. 372
A sudden conflict rises from the swell, iv. 135
As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds regain, iv. 76
As with the Stream our voyage we pursue, iv. 96
At early dawn, or rather when the air, ii. 364
A Traveller on the skirt of Sarum's Plain, i. 53
A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain, iii. 276
At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears, ii. 182
Avaunt all specious pliancy of mind, iii. 102
A voice, from long-expecting thousands sent, iv. 133
A volant Tribe of Bards on earth are found, ii. 341
Avon, — a precious, an immortal name! iii. 291
A weight of awe, not easy to be borne, iv. 220
A whirl-blast from behind the hill, ii. 22
A winged Goddess, clothed in vesture wrought, iii. 129
A youth too certain of his power to wade, iv. 200

Bard of the Fleece, whose skilful genius made, ii. 330
Beaumont! it was thy wish that I should rear, ii. 322
Before I see another day, i. 288
Before the world had passed her time of youth, iv. 336
Begone, thou fond presumptuous Elf, ii. 23
Beguiled into forgetfulness of care, iv. 313
Behold an emblem of our human mind, v. 86

Behold a pupil of the monkish gown, iv. 89
Behold her, single in the field, iii. 19
Behold, within the leafy shade, i. 188
Beloved Vale! I said, when I shall con, ii. 322
Beneath the concave of an April sky, ii. 245
Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed, ii. 38
Beneath yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound, v. 78
Be this the chosen site; the virgin sod, iv. 153
Between two sister moorland rills, ii. 60
Bishops and Priests, blessèd are ye, if deep, iv. 138
Black Demons hovering o'er his mitred head, iv. 97
Blest is this Isle,—our native Land, v. 30
Blest Statesman he, whose Mind's unselfish will, iv. 325
Bold words affirmed, in days when faith was strong, iv. 197
Brave Schill! by death delivered, take thy flight, iii. 96
Bright Flower! whose home is everywhere, iv. 246
Broken in fortune, but in mind entire, iv. 202
——— Brook and road, ii. 125
Brook! whose society the poet seeks, ii. 362
Bruges I saw attired with golden light, iii. 136
But here no cannon thunders to the gale, iii. 269
But liberty, and triumphs on the Main, iv. 152
But, to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book, iv. 116
But, to remote Northumbria's royal Hall, iv. 82
But what if one, through grove or flowery mead, iv. 87
But whence came they who for the Saviour Lord, iv. 105
By a blest Husband guided, Mary came, v. 144
By antique Fancy trimmed,—though lowly, bred, iii. 154
By Art's bold privilege Warrior and War-horse stand, ii. 385
By chain yet stronger must the Soul be tied, iv. 144
By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze, iii. 109
By playful smiles, alas! too oft, v. 146
By such examples moved to unbought pains, iv. 88
By their floating mill, ii. 64
By vain affections unenthralled, v. 145

Call not the royal Swede unfortunate, iii. 97
Calm as an under-current, strong to draw, iv. 134
Calm is all nature as a resting wheel, i. 2
Calm is the fragrant air, and loth to lose, iv. 160
Calvert! it must not be unheard by them, ii. 342
Change me, some God, into that breathing rose! iii. 263
Chatsworth! thy stately mansion, and the pride, ii. 380
Child of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream, iii. 21
Child of the clouds! remote from every taint, iii. 249
Clarkson! it was an obstinate hill to climb, iii. 86
Closing the sacred Book which long has fed, iv. 148
Clouds, lingering yet, extend in solid bars, iii. 88
Coldly we spake. The Saxons, overpowered, iv. 93
Come ye, who, if (which Heaven avert!) the Land, iii. 80
Companion! by whose buoyant spirit cheered, iii. 189

Complacent Fictions were they, yet the same, iii. 205

Dark and more dark the shades of evening fell, ii. 349
Darkness surrounds us; seeking, we are lost, iv. 75
Days passed, — and Monte Calvo would not clear, iii. 208
Days undefiled by luxury or sloth, iv. 328
Dear be the Church, that, watching o'er the needs, iv. 141
Dear Child of Nature, let them rail, ii. 220
Dear Fellow-travellers! think not that the Muse, iii. 135
Dear native regions, I foretell, i. 1
Dear Relics! from a pit of vilest mould, iii. 117
Dear to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed, iv. 189
Deep is the lamentation! not alone, iv. 115
Degenerate Douglas! O the unworthy Lord! iii. 28
Departed Child! I could forget thee once, i. 302
Departing Summer hath assumed, iv. 284
Deplorable his lot who tills the ground, iv. 100
Desire we past illusions to recall, iv. 197
Desponding Father! mark this altered bough, ii. 359
Despond who will, — I heard a voice exclaim, iv. 203
Destined to war from very infancy, v. 140
Did pangs of grief for lenient Time too keen, iv. 200
Discourse was deemed Man's noblest attribute, iv. 257
Dishonored Rock and Ruin! that, by law, iii. 280
Dogmatic Teachers, of the snow-white fur, ii. 362
Doomed as we are our native dust, iii. 147
Doubling and doubling with laborious walk, iii. 283
Down a swift stream, thus far, a bold design, iv. 135
Dread hour! when, upheaved by war's sulphurous blast, iii 150
Driven in by Autumn's sharpening air, i. 373

Earth has not anything to show more fair, ii. 365
Eden! till now thy beauty had I viewed, iv. 216
Emperors and Kings, how oft have temples rung, iii. 119
England! the time is come when thou shouldst wean, iii. 77
Enlightened Teacher, gladly from thy hand, ii. 392
Enough! for see, with dim association, iv. 105
Enough of climbing toil! — Ambition treads, iv. 281
Enough of garlands, of the Arcadian crook, iii. 282
Enough of rose-bud lips, and eyes, v. 56
Ere the Brothers through the gateway, v. 36
Ere with cold beads of midnight dew, i. 275
Ere yet our course was graced with social trees, iii. 252
Eternal Lord! eased of a cumbrous load, iii. 222
Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky, ii. 195
Even as a dragon's eye that feels the stress, ii. 358
Even so for me a Vision sanctified, ii. 338
Even such the contrast that, where'er we move, iv. 126
Even while I speak, the sacred roofs of France, iv. 151
Excuse is needless when with love sincere, ii. 332

Failing impartial measure to dispense, ii. 390
Fair Ellen Irwin, when she sat, iii. 11
Fair Lady! can I sing of flowers, ii. 56
Fair Land! Thee all men greet with joy; how few, iii 224
Fair Prime of life! were it enough to gild, ii. 346
Fair Star of evening, Splendor of the west, iii. 64
Fallen, and diffused into a shapeless heap, iii. 265
Fame tells of groves, — from England far away, ii. 370
Fancy, who leads the pastimes of the glad, ii. 17
Farewell, thou little Nook of mountain-ground, i. 266
Far from my dearest Friend, 't is mine to rove, i. 3
Far from our home by Grasmere's quiet lake, v. 1
Father! to God himself we cannot give, iv. 141
Fear hath a hundred eyes that all agree, iv. 125
Feel for the wrongs to universal ken, iv. 331
Festivals have I seen that were not names, iii. 67
Fit retribution, by the moral code, iv. 336
Five years have past; five summers, with the length, ii. 186
Flattered with promise of escape, iv. 294
Fly, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere dale, iii. 36
Fond words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep, ii. 328
For action born, existing to be tried, iii. 210
Forbear to deem the Chronicler unwise, iii. 206
For ever hallowed be this morning fair, iv. 81
For gentlest uses, ofttimes Nature takes, iii. 149
Forgive, illustrious Country! these deep sighs, iii. 209
Forth from a jutting ridge, around whose base, ii. 16
For what contend the wise? — for nothing less, iv. 117
Four fiery steeds impatient of the rein, ii. 361
From Bolton's old monastic tower, iv. 4
From early youth I ploughed the restless Main, iv. 201
From false assumption rose, and, fondly hailed, iv. 99
From Little down to Least, in due degree, iv. 142
From low to high doth dissolution climb, iv. 150
From Rite and Ordinance abused they fled, iv. 137
From Stirling Castle we had seen, iii. 29
From the Baptismal hour, through weal and woe, iv. 148
From the dark chambers of dejection freed, ii. 345
From the fierce aspect of this River, throwing, iii. 145
From the Pier's head, musing, and with increase, iii. 184
From this deep chasm, where quivering sunbeams play, iii 353
Frowns are on every Muse's face, ii. 54
Furl we the sails, and pass with tardy oars, iv. 103

Genius of Raphael! if thy wings, ii. 260
Giordano, verily thy Pencil's skill, iv. 180
Glad sight wherever new with old, ii. 58
Glide gently, thus for ever glide, i. 19
Glory to God! and to the Power who came, iv. 158
Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes, iii. 88
Go, faithful Portrait! and where long hath knelt, ii. 382

Grant, that by this unsparing hurricane, iv. 116
Great men have been among us; hands that penned, iii. 78
Greta, what fearful listening! when huge stones, iv. 185
Grief, thou hast lost an ever-ready friend, ii. 332
Grieve for the Man who hither came bereft, iii. 215

Had this effulgence disappeared, iv. 170
Hail, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night, iii. 125
Hail to the fields, — with Dwellings sprinkled o'er, iii. 256
Hail, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour, ii. 356
Hail, Virgin Queen! o'er many an envious bar, iv. 122
Hail, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye, iii. 95
Happy the feeling from the bosom thrown, ii. 320
Hard task! exclaim the undisciplined, to lean, iv. 329
Hark! 't is the Thrush, undaunted, undepress, ii. 388
Harmonious Powers with Nature work, v. 27
Harp! couldst thou venture, on thy boldest string, iv. 128
Hast thou seen, with flash incessant, v. 82
——— Hast thou then survived, ii. 82
Haydon! let worthier judges praise the skill, ii. 383
Here Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall, iv. 100
Here, on our native soil, we breathe once more, iii. 70
Here on their knees men swore: the stones were black, iv. 214
Here pause: the poet claims at least this praise, iii. 106
Here stood an Oak, that long had borne affixed, iii. 293
Here, where, of havoc tired and rash undoing, ii. 397
Her eyes are wild, her head is bare, i. 377
Her only pilot the soft breeze, the boat, ii. 324
High bliss is only for a higher state, i. 372
High deeds, O Germans, are to come from you, iii. 87
High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate, ii. 179
High is our calling, Friend! — Creative Art, ii. 344
High on a broad, unfertile tract of forest-skirted Down, i. 225
High on her speculative tower, iii. 164
His simple truths did Andrew glean, ii. 25
Holy and heavenly Spirits as they are, iv. 124
Homeward we turn. Isle of Columba's Cell, iv. 214
Hope rules a land for ever green, ii. 233
Hope smiled when your nativity was cast, iv. 211
Hopes, what are they? — Beads of morning, v. 79
How art thou named? In search of what strange land, ii. 372
How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high, v. 28
How beautiful when up a lofty height, i. 359
How beautiful your presence, how benign, iv. 84
How blest the Maid whose heart — yet free, iii. 168
How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright, ii. 351
How disappeared he? Ask the newt and toad, iii. 288
How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled, iv. 120
How profitless the relics that we cull, iii. 295
How richly glows the water's breast, i. 18
How rich that forehead's calm expanse, i. 282

How sad a welcome! To each voyager, iv. 213
How shall I paint thee? — Be this naked stone, iii. 250
How soon, alas! did Man, created pure, iv. 98
How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks, ii. 344
Humanity, delighting to behold, iii. 106
Hunger, and sultry heat, and nipping blast, iii. 104

I am not one who much or oft delight, iv. 254
I come, ye little noisy Crew, v. 147
I dropped my pen; and listened to the Wind, iii. 90
If from the public way you turn your steps, i. 342
If Life were slumber on a bed of down, iv. 190
If Nature, for a favorite child, iv. 247
If there be prophets on whose spirits rest, iv. 73
If these brief Records, by the Muses' art, ii. 366
If the whole weight of what we think and feel, ii. 348
If this great world of joy and pain, iv. 304
If thou in the dear love of some one Friend, v. 84
If to Tradition faith be due, iii. 285
If with old love of you, dear Hills! I share, iii. 225
I grieved for Buonaparté, with a vain, iii. 66
I have a boy of five years old, i. 209
I heard (alas! 't was only in a dream), ii. 347
I heard a thousand blended notes, iv. 233
I know an aged Man constrained to dwell, v. 24
I listen, — but no faculty of mine, iii. 154
Imagination — ne'er before content, iii. 120
I marvel how Nature could ever find space, iv. 234
I met Louisa in the shade, i. 272
Immured in Bothwell's towers, at times the Brave, iii. 290
In Bruges town is many a street, iii. 137
In desultory walk through orchard grounds, v. 46
In distant countries have I been, i. 291
In due observance of an ancient rite, iii. 99
Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood, iii. 71
Inmate of a mountain dwelling, ii. 218
In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud, ii. 394
Intent on gathering wool from hedge and brake, ii. 390.
In these fair vales hath many a Tree, v. 78
In the sweet shire of Cardigan, iv. 237
In this still place, remote from men, iii. 16
In trellised shed with clustering roses gay, iv. 1
Intrepid sons of Albion! not by you, iii. 117
In youth from rock to rock I went, ii. 32
I rose while yet the cattle, heat-oppressed, iii. 266
I saw a Mother's eye intensely bent, iv. 119
I saw an aged Beggar in my walk, v. 143
I saw far off the dark top of a Pine, iii. 203
I saw the figure of a lovely Maid, iv. 138
Is *Death*, when evil against good has fought, v. 334
I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold, iii. 2

Is it a reed that 's shaken by the wind, iii. 65
Is then no nook of English ground secure, ii. 395
Is then the final page before me spread, iii. 184
Is there a power that can sustain and cheer, iii. 98
Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill? iii. 204
I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide, iii. 270
It is a beauteous evening, calm and free, ii. 339
It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown, ii. 192
It is not to be thought of, that the Flood, iii. 74
It is the first mild day of March, iv. 235
I travelled among unknown men, i. 275
——— It seems a day, ii. 123
It was a *moral* end for which they fought, iii. 94
It was an April morning: fresh and clear, ii. 1
I 've watched you now a full half-hour, i. 265
I wandered lonely as a cloud, ii. 130
I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile, v. 150
I watch, and long have watched, with calm regret, ii 348
I, who accompanied with faithful pace, iv. 72

Jesu! bless our slender Boat, iii. 142
Jones! as from Calais southward you and I, iii. 65
Just as those final words were penned, the sun broke out in power, i. 227

Keep for the Young the impassioned smile, ii. 212

Lady! a Pen, perhaps with thy regard, v. 48
Lady! I rifled a Parnassian Cave, ii. 353
Lady! the songs of Spring were in the grove, ii. 354
Lament! for Diocletian's fiery sword, iv. 76
Lance, shield, and sword relinquished, at his side, iv. 86
Last night, without a voice, that Vision spake, iv. 129
Let other bards of angels sing, i. 281
Let thy wheelbarrow alone, ii. 30
Let us quit the leafy arbor, i. 221
Lie here, without a record of thy worth, iv. 262
Life with yon Lambs, like day, is just begun, ii. 385
Like a shipwrecked Sailor tost, iv. 295
List, the winds of March are blowing, iv. 298
List! — 't was the Cuckoo. — O, with what delight, iii. 211
List, ye who pass by Lyulph's Tower, iv. 222
Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape, iii. 182
Lone Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they, ii. 353
Long-favored England! be not thou misled, iv. 327
Long has the dew been dried on tree and lawn, iii. 207
Lonsdale! it were unworthy of a Guest, iv. 221
Look at the fate of summer flowers, i. 276
Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid, iii. 98
Lord of the vale! astounding Flood, iii. 52
Loud is the Vale! the Voice is up, v. 160

Loving she is, and tractable, though wild, i. 190
Lo! where she stands fixed in a saint-like trance, ii. 386
Lo! where the Moon along the sky, iv. 259
Lowther! in thy majestic Pile are seen, iv. 221
Lulled by the sound of pastoral bells, iii. 178
Lyre! though such power do in thy magic live, ii. 139

Man's life is like a Sparrow, mighty King, iv. 82
Mark how the feathered tenants of the flood, ii. 221
Mark the concentred hazels that inclose, ii. 349
Meek Virgin Mother, more benign, iii. 150
Men of the Western World! in Fate's dark book, iv. 327
Men, who have ceased to reverence, soon defy, iv. 128
Mercy and Love have met thee on thy road, iv. 74
Methinks that I could trip o'er heaviest soil, iv. 123
Methinks that to some vacant hermitage, iv. 86
Methinks 't were no unprecedented feat, iii. 264
Methought I saw the footsteps of a throne, ii. 338
'Mid crowded obelisks and urns, iii. 9
Mid-noon is past; — upon the sultry mead, iii. 264
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour, iii. 73
Mine ear has rung, my spirit sunk subdued, iv. 154
Miserrimus! and neither name nor date, ii. 378
Monastic Domes! following my downward way, iv. 150
Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes, iv. 229
Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrost, iv. 114
Motions and Means, on land and sea at war, iv. 219
My frame hath often trembled with delight, iii. 260
My heart leaps up when I behold, i. 187

Nay, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands, i. 49
Near Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove, iii. 208
Never enlivened with the liveliest ray, ii. 74
Next morning Troilus began to clear, v. 112
No fiction was it of the antique age, iii. 255
No more: the end is sudden and abrupt, iii. 296
No mortal object did these eyes behold, ii. 336
No record tells of lance opposed to lance, iii. 267
Nor scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend, iv. 84
Nor shall the eternal roll of praise reject, iv. 132
Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid, iv. 79
——— Not a breath of air, ii. 121
Not envying Latian shades, — if yet they throw, iii. 249
Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep, iii. 269
Not in the lucid intervals of life, iv. 164
Not in the mines beyond the western main, iv 228
Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly, iii. 144
Not Love, not War, nor the tumultuous swell, ii. 348
Not 'mid the World's vain objects, that enslave, iii. 89
Not sedentary all: there are who roam, iv. 88
Not seldom, clad in radiant vest, v. 83

Not so that Pair whose youthful spirits dance, iii. 254
Not the whole warbling grove in concert heard, ii. 375
Not to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew, iv. 206
Not to the object specially designed, iv. 334
Not utterly unworthy to endure, iv. 114
Not without heavy grief of heart did he. v. 142
Now that all hearts are glad, all faces bright, iii. 110
Now that the farewell tear is dried, iii. 159
Now we are tired of boisterous joy, iii. 37
Now when the primrose makes a splendid show, v. 21
Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room, ii. 320

Oak of Guernica! Tree of holier power, iii. 101
O blithe New-comer! I have heard, ii. 118
O dearer far than light and life are dear, i. 284
O'er the wide earth, on mountain and on plain, iii. 93
O'erweening Statesmen have full long relied, iii. 103
O flower of all that springs from gentle blood, v. 141
Of mortal parents is the Hero born, iii. 90
O for a dirge! But why complain? v. 163
O for a kindling touch from that pure flame, iii. 118
O for the help of Angels to complete, iii. 141
O Friend! I know not which way I must look, iii. 72
Oft have I caught, upon a fitful breeze, iv. 206
Oft have I seen, ere Time had ploughed my cheek, ii 334
Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray, i. 199
Oft is the medal faithful to its trust, v. 71
O gentle Sleep! do they belong to thee, ii. 327
O happy time of youthful lovers! (thus, i. 312
O Life! without thy checkered scene, iii. 148
O Lord, our Lord! how wondrously, quoth she, v. 87
O mountain Stream! the Shepherd and his Cot, iii. 257
Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee, iii. 67
Once I could hail (howe'er serene the sky), v. 28
Once in a lonely hamlet I sojourned, i. 308
Once more the Church is seized with sudden fear, iv. 109
Once on the top of Tynwald's formal mound, iv. 202
One might believe that natural miseries, iii. 75
One morning, raw it was and wet, i. 305
One who was suffering tumult in his soul, ii. 352
On his morning rounds, the Master, iv. 260
O Nightingale! thou surely art, ii. 127
On, loitering Muse! — the swift Stream chides us,— on! iii. 254
O now that the genius of Bewick were mine, v. 132
On to Iona! — What can she afford, iv. 212
Open your gates, ye everlasting Piles, iv. 155
O pleasant exercise of hope and joy, ii. 193
O there is blessing in this gentle breeze, vii. 9
O thou who movest onward with a mind, v. 137
O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought, i. 217
Our bodily life, some plead, that life the shrine, iv. 337

Our walk was far among the ancient trees, ii. 10
Outstretching flame-ward his upbraided hand, iv. 120
O what a Wreck! how changed in mien and speech, ii. 389
O, what 's the matter? what 's the matter? v. 41

Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies, ii. 41
Part fenced by man, part by a rugged steep, iii. 276
Pastor and Patriot! — at whose bidding rise, iv. 188
Patriots informed with Apostolic light, iv. 137
Pause, courteous Spirit! — Balbi supplicates, v. 143
Pause, Traveller! whosoe'er thou be, v. 81
Pelion and Ossa flourish side by side, ii. 323
People! your chains are severing link by link, iv. 323
Perhaps some needful service of the State, v. 136
Pleasures newly found are sweet, ii. 43
Portentous change, when History can appear, iv. 325
Praised be the Art whose subtle power could stay, ii. 325
Praised be the Rivers, from their mountain springs, iv. 106
Prejudged by foes determined not to spare, iv. 127
Presentiments! they judge not right, ii. 241
Prompt transformation works the novel Lore, iv. 83
Proud were ye, Mountains, when, in times of old, ii. 396
Pure element of waters! wheresoe'er, ii. 363

Queen of the stars! so gentle, so benign, iv. 178

Ranging the heights of Scawfell or Black Comb, iv. 196
Rapt above earth by pówer of one fair face, iii. 221
Realms quake by turns: proud Arbitress of grace, iv. 96
Record we too, with just and faithful pen, iv. 101
Redoubted King, of courage leonine, iv. 95
Reluctant call it was; the rite delayed, iv. 324
Rest, rest, perturbèd Earth, v. 161
Return, Content! for fondly I pursued, iii. 265
Rise! — they *have* risen: of brave Aneurin ask, iv. 78
Rotha, my Spiritual Child! this head was gray, ii. 378
Rude is this Edifice, and thou hast seen, v. 74

Sacred Religion! mother of form and fear, iii. 260
Sad thoughts, avaunt! — partake we their blithe cheer, iii. 261
Said Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud, iv. 324
Say, what is Honor? — 'T is the finest sense, iii. 95
Say, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing hills, iii. 277
Scattering, like birds escaped the fowler's net, iv. 122
Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned, ii. 343
Screams round the Arch-druid's brow the sea-mew, — white, iv. 74
Seek who will delight in fable, i. 233
See the Condemned alone within his cell, iv. 339
See what gay wild-flowers deck this earth-built Cot, iii. 284
See, where his difficult way that Old Man wins, iii. 223

Serene, and fitted to embrace, ii. 204
Serving no haughty Muse, my hands have here, ii. 391
Seven Daughters had Lord Archibald, ii. 46
Shame on this faithless heart! that could allow, ii. 386
She dwelt among the untrodden ways, i. 274
She had a tall man's height or more, ii. 140
She was a Phantom of delight, ii. 126
Show me the noblest Youth of present time, ii. 225
Shout, for a mighty Victory is won, iii. 81
Shun not this rite, neglected, yea abhorred, iv. 146
Since risen from ocean, ocean to defy, iv. 204
Six months to six years added he remained, v. 145
Six thousand veterans, practised in war's game, iii. 32
Small service is true service while it lasts, v. 48
Smile of the Moon! — for so I name, i. 285
So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive, iv. 319
Soft as a cloud is yon blue Ridge, — the Mere, iv. 167
Sole listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played, iii. 251
Soon did the Almighty Giver of all rest, v. 12
Spade! with which Wilkinson hath tilled his lands iv. 257
Stay, bold Adventurer; rest awhile thy limbs, v. 75
Stay, little cheerful Robin! stay, v. 24
Stay near me; do not take thy flight, i. 187
Stern Daughter of the Voice of God, iv. 266
Strange fits of passion have I known, i. 273
Stranger! this hillock of misshapen stones, v. 76
Stretched on the dying Mother's lap lies dead, iv. 217
Such age how beautiful! O Lady bright, ii. 377
Such fruitless questions may not long beguile, iii. 258
Surprised by joy, impatient as the Wind, ii. 337
Sweet Flower! belike one day to have, v. 153
Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower, iii. 13
Sweet is the holiness of Youth; — so felt, iv. 118
Swiftly turn the murmuring wheel, ii. 51
Sylph was it? or a Bird more bright, ii. 75

Take, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take, iii. 250
Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense, iv. 156
Tell me, ye Zephyrs! that unfold, ii. 20
Tenderly do we feel by Nature's law, iv. 333
Thanks for the lessons of this spot, — fit school, iv. 210
That happy gleam of vernal eyes, v. 23
That heresies should strike, if truth be scanned, iv. 78
That is work of waste and ruin, i. 189
That way look, my Infant, lo, ii. 77
The Baptist might have been ordained to cry, iii. 220
The Bard, — whose soul is meek as dawning day, iii. 119
The captive Bird was gone; — to cliff or moor, iv. 205
The cattle, crowding round this beverage clear, iv. 188
The Cock is crowing, ii. 138
The Crescent-moon, the Star of Love, iv. 175
The Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair, iv. 274

The days are cold, the nights are long, i. 301
The dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink, i. 213
The embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine, v. 70
The encircling ground, in native turf arrayed, iv. 154
The fairest, brightest hues of ether fade, ii. 325
The feudal Keep the bastions of Cohorn, iv. 198
The fields which with covetous spirit we sold, i. 296
The floods are roused, and will not soon be weary, iv. 218
The forest huge of ancient Caledon, iii. 292
The formal World relaxes her cold chain, iv. 340
The gallant Youth, who may have gained, iii. 271
The gentlest Poet, with free thoughts endowed, ii. 259
The gentlest Shade that walked Elysian plains, iii. 1
The God of Love, — *ah benedicite!* v. 97
The imperial Consort of the Fairy-king, ii. 329
The imperial stature, the colossal stride, ii. 368
The Kirk of Ulpha to the pilgrim's eye, iii. 268
The Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor, ii. 171
The Land we from our fathers had in trust, iii. 92
The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill, iv. 168
The linnet's warble, sinking towards a close, iv. 165
——— The little hedgerow birds, v. 134
The lovely Nun (submissive, but more meek, iv. 112
The Lovers took within this ancient grove, iii. 293
The martial courage of a day is vain, iii. 96
The massy Ways, carried across these heights, v. 78
The Minstrels played their Christmas tune, iii. 246
The most alluring clouds that mount the sky, ii. 384
The old inventive Poets, had they seen, iii. 261
The oppression of the tumult, — wrath and scorn, iv. 80
The peace which others seek they find, i. 277
The pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute, iii. 279
The post-boy drove with fierce career, i. 196
The power of Armies is a visible thing, iii. 105
The prayers I make will then be sweet indeed, ii. 336
There are no colors in the fairest sky, iv. 131
There is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear, iii. 76
There is a change, — and I am poor, i. 280
There is a Flower, the lesser Celandine, v. 131
There is a little unpretending Rill, ii. 324
There is an Eminence, — of these our hills, ii. 7
There is a pleasure in poetic pains, ii. 355
There is a Thorn, — it looks so old, ii. 162
There is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale, ii. 121
There never breathed a man who, when his life, v. 138
There! said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride, iv. 216
There 's George Fisher, Charles Fleming, and Reginald Shore, i. 211
There 's more in words than I can teach, i. 369
There 's not a nook within this solemn Pass, iii. 278
There 's something in a flying horse, ii. 273

There was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs, ii. 117
There was a roaring in the wind all night, ii. 155
There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream, v. 177
The Roman Consul doomed his sons to die, iv. 333
The Sabbath bells renew the inviting peal, iv. 146
The saintly Youth has ceased to rule, discrowned, iv. 119
These times strike moneyed worldlings with dismay, iii. 76
These Tourists, Heaven preserve us! needs must live, i. 238
The Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo! v. 156
The Shepherd, looking eastward, softly said, ii. 355
——— The sky is overcast, ii. 120
The soaring lark is blest as proud, v. 13
The Spirit of Antiquity — enshrined, iii. 137
The stars are mansions built by Nature's hand, ii. 358
The struggling rill insensibly is grown, iii. 254
The sun has long been set, iv. 170
The sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to rest, iv. 162
The Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire, iv. 161
The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields, iv. 283
The tears of man in various measure gush, iv. 118
The Troop will be impatient; let us hie, i. 80
The turbaned Race are poured in thickening swarms, iv. 94
The unremitting voice of nightly streams, iv. 295
The valley rings with mirth and joy, i. 205
The Vested Priest before the Altar stands, iv. 144
The Virgin-Mountain, wearing like a Queen, iv. 126
The Voice of Song from distant lands shall call, iii. 68
The wind is now thy organist; — a clank, iii. 278
The woman-hearted Confessor prepares, iv. 92
The world forsaken, all its busy cares, iii. 216
The world is too much with us; late and soon, ii. 341
They called thee MERRY ENGLAND, in old time, iv. 184
They dreamt not of a perishable home, iv. 157
The Young-ones gathered in from hill and dale, iv. 143
They seek, are sought; to daily battle led, iii. 104
They who have seen the noble Roman's scorn, iii. 206
This Height a ministering Angel might select, ii. 222
This Land of Rainbows spanning glens whose walls, iii. 280
This Lawn, a carpet all alive, iv. 288
This moss-lined shed, green, soft, and dry, ii. 59
This Spot — at once unfolding sight so fair, iv. 332
Those breathing Tokens of your kind regard, v. 15
Those had given earliest notice, as the lark, iv. 107
Those old credulities, to nature dear, iii. 204
Those silver clouds collected round the sun, ii. 224
Those words were uttered as in pensive mood, ii. 350
Though I beheld at first with blank surprise, ii. 387
Though joy attend thee orient at the birth, iii. 289
Though many suns have risen and set, iv. 309
Though narrow be that old Man's cares, and near, ii. 361
Though searching damps and many an envious flaw, iii. 161

Though the bold wings of Poesy affect, ii. 366
Though the torrents from their fountains, ii. 63
Though to give timely warning and deter, iv. 337
Thou look'st upon me, and dost fondly think, iv. 187
Thou sacred Pile! whose turrets rise, iii. 158
Threats come which no submission may assuage, iv. 111
Three years she grew in sun and shower, ii. 128
Through shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls, ii. 371
Thus all things lead to Charity, secured, iv. 152
Thus is the storm abated by the craft, iv. 108
Thy functions are ethereal, ii. 263
'T is eight o'clock, — a clear March night, i. 324
'T is gone, — with old belief and dream, ii. 236
'T is He whose yester-evening's high disdain, ii. 389
'T is not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined, v. 126
'T is said, fantastic Ocean doth enfold, iii. 135
'T is said, that some have died for love, i. 278
'T is said that to the brow of yon fair hill, ii. 380
'T is spent, — this burning day of June, ii. 85
To a good Man of most dear memory, v. 168
To appease the Gods; or public thanks to yield, iii. 174
To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking fen, iii. 48
To kneeling Worshippers no earthly floor, iv. 147
Too frail to keep the lofty vow, iii. 6
To public notice, with reluctance strong, v. 163
Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men, iii. 69
Tradition, be thou mute! Oblivion, throw, iii. 281
Tranquillity! the sovereign aim wert thou, iv. 218
Troubled long with warring notions, v. 83
True is it that Ambrosio Salinero, v. 139
'T was summer, and the sun had mounted high, vi. 11
Two Voices are there; one is of the sea, iii. 71

Under the shadow of a stately Pile, iii. 220
Ungrateful Country, if thou e'er forget, iv. 134
Unless to Peter's Chair the viewless wind, iv. 98
Unquiet Childhood here by special grace, ii. 376
Untouched through all severity of cold, ii. 381
Up, Timothy, up with your staff and away, i. 307
Up to the throne of God is borne, iv. 305
Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books, iv. 232
Up with me! up with me into the clouds, ii. 39
Urged by Ambition, who with subtlest skill, iv. 90
Uttered by whom, or how inspired, designed, iii. 144

Vallombrosa! I longed in thy shadiest wood, iii. 172
Vallombrosa! I longed in thy shadiest wood, iii. 218
Vanguard of Liberty, ye men of Kent, iii. 78

Wait, prithee, wait! this answer Lesbia threw, ii. 376
Wanderer! that stoop'st so low, and com'st so near, iv. 175

Wansfell! this Household has a favored lot, ii. 398
Ward of the Law! — dread Shadow of a King, ii. 369
Was it to disenchant, and to undo, iii. 140
Was the aim frustrated by force or guile, ii. 364
Watch, and be firm! for soul-subduing vice, iv. 77
Weak is the will of Man, his judgment blind, ii. 342
We can endure that he should waste our lands, iii. 102
Weep not, beloved Friends! nor let the air, v. 136
We had a female Passenger who came, iii. 69
We have not passed into a doleful City, iv. 215
Well have you Railway Labourers to this ground, ii. 397
Well mayst thou halt, — and gaze with brightening eye, ii. 321
Well sang the Bard who called the grave, in strains, iii. 282
Well worthy to be magnified are they, iv. 136
Were there, below, a spot of holy ground, i. 22
We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd, iv. 209
We talked with open heart, and tongue, iv. 251
We walked along, while bright and red, iv. 248
What aim had they, the pair of Monks, in size, iii. 217
What aspect bore the Man who roved or fled, iii. 253
What awful perspective! while from our sight, iv. 156
What beast in wilderness or cultured field, iv. 107
What beast of chase hath broken from the cover? iii. 173
What crowd is this? what have we here? we must not pass it by, ii. 135
What heavenly smiles! O Lady mine, i. 283
What! he who, 'mid the kindred throng, iii. 55
What if our numbers barely could defy, iii. 79
What is good for a bootless bene, iv. 271
What know we of the Blest above, iii. 149
What lovelier home could gentle Fancy choose, iii. 140
What mischief cleaves to unsubdued regret, iv. 174
What need of clamorous bells, or ribbons gay, ii. 334
What strong allurement draws, what spirit guides, ii. 392
What though the Accused, upon his own appeal, iv. 289
What though the Italian pencil wrought not here, iii. 152
What way does the Wind come? What way does he go? i. 19
What, you are stepping westward? — Yea, iii. 18
When Alpine vales threw forth a suppliant cry, iv. 132
Whence that low voice? — A whisper from the heart, iii. 262
When, far and wide, swift as the beams of morn, iii. 86
When first, descending from the moorlands, v. 173
When haughty expectations prostrate lie, ii. 356
When here with Carthage Rome to conflict came, iii. 210
When human touch (as monkish books attest), ii. 360
When I have borne in memory what has tamed, iii. 74
When, in the antique age of bow and spear, v. 35
When, looking on the present face of things, iii. 78
When Philoctetes in the Lemnian isle, ii. 374
When Ruth was left half desolate, ii. 145
When the soft hand of sleep had closed the latch, iii. 111

When thy great soul was freed from mortal chains, iv. 90
When, to the attractions of the busy world, ii. 11
Where are they now, those wanton Boys? ii. 142
Where art thou, my beloved Son, i. 298
Where be the noisy followers of the game, iii. 183
Where be the temples which, in Britain's isle, i. 255
Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends, ii. 370
Where lies the Land to which yon Ship must go? ii. 349
Where lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's creed, iv. 182
Where long and deeply hath been fixed the root, iv. 104
Where towers are crushed, and unforbidden weeds, iii. 226
Where will they stop, those breathing Powers, ii. 250
While Anna's peers and early playmates tread, ii. 374
While beams of orient light shoot wide and high, ii. 394
While flowing rivers yield a blameless sport, ii. 330
While from the purpling east departs, iv. 306
While Merlin paced the Cornish sands, iii. 229
While not a leaf seems faded; while the fields, ii. 351
While poring Antiquarians search the ground, ii. 379
While the Poor gather round, till the end of time, iii. 294
Who but hails the sight with pleasure, ii. 52
Who but is pleased to watch the moon on high, iv. 181
Who comes, — with rapture greeted, and caressed, iv. 130
Who fancied what a pretty sight, ii. 48
Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he, iv. 268
Who ponders National events shall find, iv. 326
Who rashly strove thy Image to portray? iv. 320
Who rises on the banks of Seine, iii. 82
Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce, iii. 267
Why art thou silent? Is thy love a plant, ii. 382
Why cast ye back upon the Gallic shore, iii. 182
Why, Minstrel, these untuneful murmurings, ii. 326
Why should the Enthusiast, journeying through this Isle, iv. 184
Why should we weep or mourn, Angelic Boy, v. 159
Why sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled, iv. 158
Why stand we gazing on the sparkling Brine, iv. 199
Why, William, on that old gray stone, iv. 230
Wild Redbreast! hadst thou at Jemima's lip, ii. 373
Wisdom and Spirit of the universe, i. 219
With copious eulogy in prose or rhyme, v. 166
With each recurrence of this glorious morn, ii. 333
With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the sky, ii. 357
Within her gilded cage confined, ii. 53
Within our happy Castle there dwelt One, i. 269
Within the mind strong fancies work, ii. 209
With little here to do or see, ii. 36
With sacrifice before the rising morn, ii. 196
With Ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh, ii. 340
Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey, iv. 91
Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease, iv. 109
Woman! the Power who left his throne on high, iv. 145

Wouldst thou be taught, when sleep has taken flight, ii. 253
Would that our scrupulous Sires had dared to leave, iv. 149

Ye Apennines! with all your fertile vales, iii. 190
Ye brood of conscience, Spectres! that frequent, iv. 335
Ye Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed Urn, v. 72
Ye sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth, ii. 367
Ye shadowy Beings, that have rights and claims, iv. 211
Yes! hope may with my strong desire keep pace, ii. 335
Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear, iv. 140
Yes, it was the mountain Echo, ii. 194
Yes! thou art fair, yet be not moved, i. 282
Yes, though he well may tremble at the sound, iv. 339
Ye Storms, resound the praises of your King, iii. 108
Yet are they here, the same unbroken knot, ii. 144
Yet many a Novice of the cloistral shade, iv. 113
Yet more, — round many a Convent's blazing fire, iv. 111
Ye, too, must fly before a chasing hand, iv. 113
Ye Trees! whose slender roots entwine, iii. 222
Yet Truth is keenly sought for, and the wind, iv. 130
Yet, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our Foes, iii. 102
Ye vales and hills whose beauty hither drew, v. 175
You call it, "Love-lies-bleeding," — so you may, ii. 73
You have heard a Spanish Lady, i. 361
Young England, — what is then become of Old, iv. 330

END OF VOL. V

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